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ISSUE 15 £3.75 JULY 1992

BRITAIN'S BEST-SELLING AMIGA GAMES MAGAZINE!

MONKEY ISLAND 2

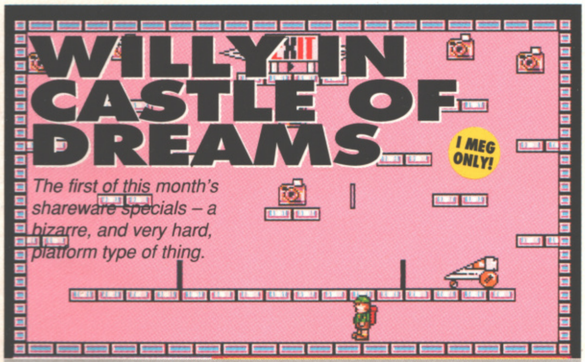
BIGGER, BETTER AND – YES! – FUNNIER TOO!

A MAGAZINE WITH *ATTITUDE*

AMIGA POWER

WOW! 2 DISKS!

DOUBLE DECKER SPECIAL!



WILLY IN CASTLE OF DREAMS

I MEG ONLY!

The first of this month's shareware specials – a bizarre, and very hard, platform type of thing.

INVADERS II

00002900
01

Brilliant horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up fun. It's magic!

SATU

SATU
MENTAL IMAGE

Coloured blocks, oriental-type style, and lots of fun.

BY MENTAL IMAGE

AMIGA POWER

WANT TO KNOW MORE? THEN FLICK TO PAGE 6 →

AMEGA RACE

10 Ships
Score 639
Hi-Score 639

Incredibly addictive Asteroids-influenced blaster of unexpected greatness. (Just try it!)

NUMBER FUMBLER

Number Fumbler
8
12
15
4
9
11
5
1
13
6
Mix
Who

Simply slide numbers about to get them in the proper order. It's dead easy! (Not!)

GALACTIC

00003122
INSERT COIN PL2
00000000
13 SECONDS LEFT
BONUS SECTION

It's new! It's a shoot-'em-up (sort of)! It's got a mad king in it! It's incredibly fast! It's weird! What else could it be but Galactic, a brill new game by ex-C64 hero Stavros Fasoulas? And here's the playable demo!

disk 15

THE WIZ!

Get out of your head with the weirdest game of the year!

REVIEWED! Jaguar XJ220, Sensible Soccer, Hook, Hostile Breed, Epic, Striker, Myth, Lure Of The Temptress and more!

ISSUE 15

THE MAGICAL SPIRIT OF SPIELBERG
ILLUMINATES YOUR MICRO
NEVERLAND
W
SW
S
SE
Hook™
ALSO AVAILABLE FOR
Nintendo
GAME BOY
ocean

PETER PAN has now grown up, far away from *NEVERLAND*, but his old enemy *CAPTAIN HOOK* has not forgotten and schemes his revenge. Kidnapping Peter's children, he lures our hero back to the Island of *PIRATES* and *"LOST BOYS"* for a final confrontation.

ATARI ST
CBM AMIGA
IBM PC &
COMPATIBLES

With the help of *TINKERBELL*, the faithful fairy, you take on the role of *PETER* in this magical adventure fraught with danger and excitement.

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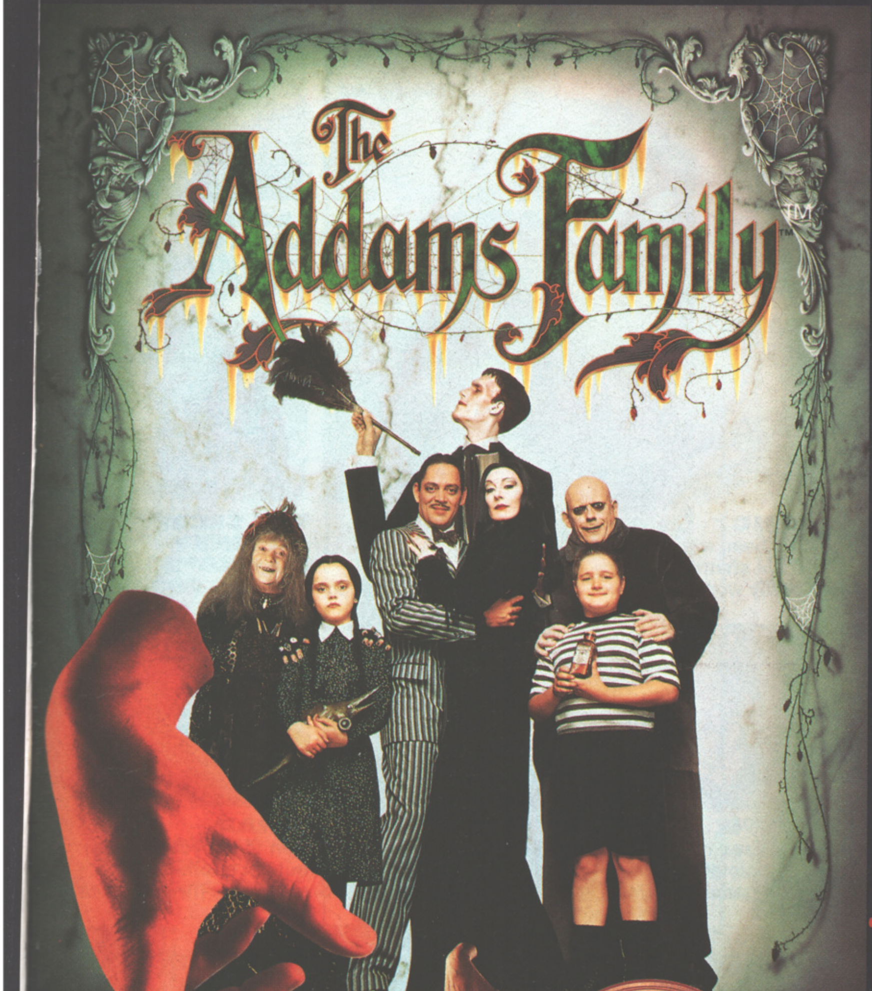
OCEAN SOFTWARE LIMITED · 6 [illegible]TRAL STREET · MANCH STER · M2

CREEPY, KOOKY, OOKY, SPOOKY!



They've got the creepiest house in town!

But not now that they've been evicted! Morticia, Lurch, Granny, Pugsley and Wednesday have gone back to their creepy abode to regain possession.

They're the Spookiest family around!

But not now that they've disappeared! As Gomez you must find your loopy loved ones in their spooky mansion house.

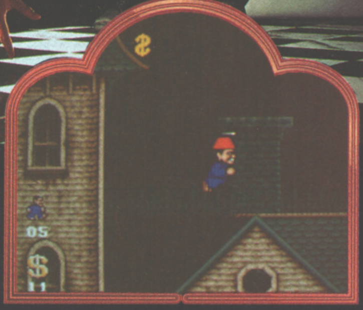
They have the Gookiest friends ever!

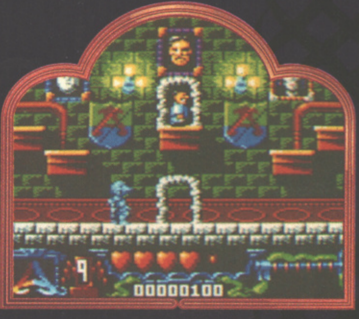
But watch out for Tully Alford - he plays mean. Tully is the treacherous lawyer intent on stealing the family fortune and who has many a dirty trick up his sleeve.

They dance a wacky dance!

And you'll be shakin', rattlin' and rollin' when the spikes, monsters and ghosts save the last one for you! If you solve the puzzles and follow the clues you might just save the Addams Family so that they can...

...Live how they wanna live!





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AMIGA POWER
ISSUE 15 JULY 1992

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GOODBYE TO: Lovely Nik Wilde of Psygnosis, who's swapping to a better job (still at Psygnosis) and thus won't be buying us lunch so much, Ian Richardson of Gremlin who was always good for a beer, and a certain rival magazine editor who's throwing in the towel and defecting to 'the other side.' Ta-ra David, we'll talk to you soon!

NEXT MONTH: The biggest single change in the history of AMIGA POWER! Don't miss it!

AMIGA POWER comes to you from Future Publishing, home of Amiga Format, Amiga Shopper, ST Format, PC Format, Your Sinclair, Commodore Format, Sega Power, Total, Public Domain, Amstrad Action and more!
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10 TRUE STORIES
Our news section shrinks in size this month – but don't worry, it's only to make room for our giant Things To Come section! And anyway, there's still room for AMIGA POWER Recommends, all the top game news and more!

14 GALLUP CHART
Sponsored by Penguin, this is *the* place to come if you want to know what's selling – and why!

17 THINGS TO COME
New! Our first purpose-built previews section arrives, complete with revealing Work In Progress reports on System 3's *Silly Putty*, Team 17's *Assassin*, Core's *Premiere*, Loriciel's *Entity* and – yes! – Origin's stunning *Wing Commander* on the Amiga!

61 COMPLETE CONTROL
John Madden American Football, Shadowlands, Parasol Stars, Apidya, Moonstone, Space Crusade, Cover Girl Poker(!), Rome, even *Mad Bomber*; plus your questions answered in The Last Resort. If you're stuck on an Amiga game, this is the place to come!

74 IF I'D KNOWN THEN...
It's back! And this time round we're talking to one of the real characters of computer gaming – Eugene Jarvis fan, ST-lover, sheep fancier and *Llamatron* creator, Mr Jeff Minter!

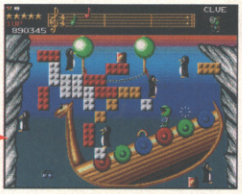
88 POINTS OF VIEW
No, we didn't learn our lesson the first time. Once again we all try to sum-up what we think of the month's games in four words or less. Impossible? Maybe, but we'll give it a shot anyway...

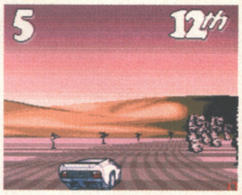
93 DO THE WRITE THING
It's the rudest, most opinionated letters page in the business, and this month that's more true than ever!

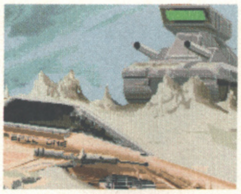
97 THE BOTTOM LINE
All new! You've never had it so good – the all-new Bottom Line features more reviews in fewer pages! Don't miss it!

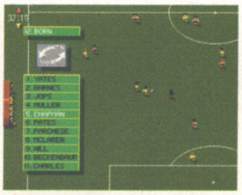
GAMES OF THE MON

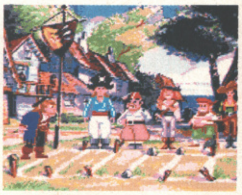
SPECIAL REVIEW PACKED ISSUE

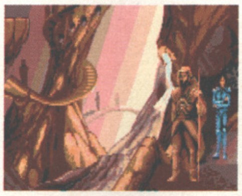

WIZKID
The most imaginative Amiga game of this (or any) year... Page 26

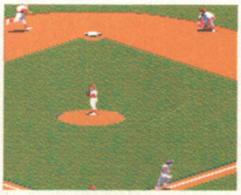

JAGUAR XJ220
Core take on *Lotus II* head on! Page 30

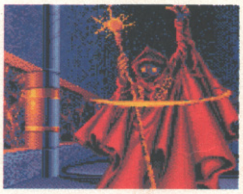

EPIC
It's been a long wait, so it's a shame it wasn't really worth it... Page 34

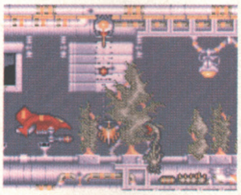

SENSIBLE SOCCER
The greatest football game *ever*! Page 36

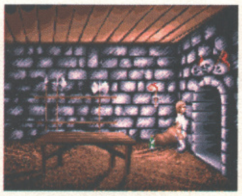

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND 2
Nuff said? Page 38

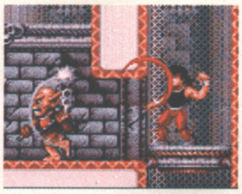

DUNE
Perhaps the most completely ill-timed film game ever Page 44


TV SPORTS BASEBALL
It's good, but no home run here Page 46


ISHAR
Don't hold your breath, but yet another FRP enters the fray! Page 48


HOSTILE BREEED
Bizarre and perplexing blasting fun Page 52


LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS
Monkey Island, British style? Page 54


RISKY WOODS
It's risky, and it's got woods in it (copyright Matt Bielby '92) Page 56

70 HERE COMES SUMMER!

Join us on the beach for your essential AMIGA POWER guide to the things you really *should* be doing this summer. From the latest coin-ops to the best in handhelds, it's all here. After all, you can't spend your whole life inside with your Amiga, now can you?

OVER 300
GAMES RATED IN EVERY ISSUE!

ONTH

BRAZIL 1 TIME
MALAWI 1 00:00

STRIKER
New software house, perhaps, but it's a great footy game Page 32

THOSE ARE MY KIDS, AND I'M THEIR FATHER

HOOK
Meanwhile, over at Ocean, something similar brews... Page 42

MYTH
Monsters, gods and ancient history – they're all here Page 50

WIN! A MOUNTAIN BIKE!
In our brilliant Carl Lewis compo! Page 91

112 BACK ISSUES
Order the old AMIGA POWER's you're missing here! Plus! Don't miss our brilliant subscription offer and more!

114 AMIGA UNIVERSE
Every month this builds into a comprehensive guide to every major character on the Amiga. Except this time it's not one character but lots – the Lemmings!

GAMES REVIEWED THIS ISSUE
JULY

FULL PRICE

Championship Manager ------------81
Discovery ------------79
Dune ------------44
Epic ------------34
European Football Champ ------------80
Hook ------------42
Hostile Breed ------------52
Ishar ------------48
Jaguar XJ220 ------------30
Jim Power ------------79
Lure Of The Temptress ------------54
Mille Miglia ------------78
Monkey Island 2 ------------38
Myth ------------50
Risky Woods ------------56
Sensible Soccer ------------36
Striker ------------32
Touchdown ------------80
TV Sports: Baseball ------------46
Ugh! ------------78
Winter Sports 92 ------------80
Wizkid ------------26

BUDGET

Artura ------------84
Battleships ------------84
Dogs Of War ------------84
Madshow TV ------------84
Manchester United ------------83
Rainbow islands ------------82
Steg The Slug ------------84
Toyota Celica GT Rally ------------82
Viz ------------83

COMPILATIONS

Bitmap Brothers Vol 1 ------------82
Fantasypak ------------83

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Asteroids Deluxe ------------86
Dataclan Games Disk 2 ------------87
Dragon Tiles ------------86
Galaxians ------------86
Microbes ------------86
One Man And His Dog ------------87
Smash TV: The Rip Off ------------87

TWO DISKS!

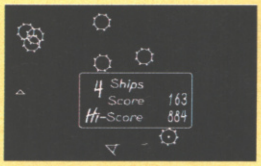
disk 15

Yes, once again it's double-disk spectacular time at AMIGA POWER this month, with a selection of fine games and demos for your delight and delectation. Like these...

AND THIS IS DISK 15

GALACTIC

Old C64 programming ace Stavros Fasoulas (remember *Sanxion*?) has broken cover at last – and with the weirdest Amiga game this side of *Wizkid*! Find out more in this exclusive – and quite brilliant – eight level playable demo!



AMEGA RACE

Like *Asteroids*? Then you'll just love this brilliant inertia-filled blaster!

Number Fumbler
8
12
15
4
9
11
5
1
13
6
Mix
Wh

NUMBER FUMBLER

They don't come a lot trickier (or more frustrating) than this one!

MENTAL IMAGE DISK

00004120
01

INVADERS II

Mental Image Game Disk 2 features some of the best in shareware arcade action ever! For a start there's *Invaders II*, which, despite the name, is actually a horizontal shoot-'em-up (and a half!)

SATU

In a completely different vein is *Satu*, an oriental-style puzzler of fiendish difficulty and a very strong hook.

SATU
MENTAL IMAGE

WILLY
SCORE 000000
LEVEL 20

WILLY IN THE CASTLE OF DREAMS

And last, but by no means least, there's *Willy* – a poor little boy scout, lost in a vast, platform-filled castle, on a quest to save an old man's sleeping patterns (or something). Whatever, it's fabulous!

GOT A FAULTY DISK?

- This isn't the sort of thing we like to hear, and happily we don't hear it very often, but if you *do* have disk problems, simply place it in an envelope, along with an SAE and a letter explaining what's wrong, and return it to this address (NOT THE AMIGA POWER OFFICE): AMIGA POWER Disk Returns 15, Tib plc, 36-50 Adelaide Street, Bradford BD5 0EA. There are more details over the page...

START READING HERE!

We're going to give you the disk instructions here, so pay attention.

● With the exception of *Willy In The Castle Of Dreams* (which will only work on 1 meg machines), this month's coverdisks will work on all Amiga A500s, A500Ps, A600s, and pretty much any other Amiga you care to mention.

● To load the disks, first make sure you've switched off your Amiga, removed all peripherals and plugged a joystick into Joystick Port 2 and a mouse into Joystick Port 1. Now insert the disk you wish to load and it will autoboot.

● Disk 15 (the one containing *Galactic*, *Amega Race* and *Number Fumbler*) actually contains a neat little game to play while it loads. Then there are two menus to worry about – one for half meg owners and one for one meg owners. Prior to the main menu you will be requested to type 'y' (return) for the half meg menu, or 'n' (return) for the one meg menu. Once the main menu has loaded, simply select the game or demo you wish to load by pressing the correct function key on the keyboard. Voila! Your game should now boot up.

● The Mental Image Gamedisk works thus: From the main screen, click on the mouse button. Then once the main menu has appeared (the one with the book) select the game you wish to load by pushing the joystick left or right, then click on fire to load. It's that easy.

● As we said, *Willy In The Castle Of Dreams* will only work with Amigas of at least one meg memory.

● Please keep the disk you are playing your game from in the drive at all times, and remember – it's the wise man who switches his machine off for 20 seconds or so before loading up a new program to keep his disks free of any stray viruses.

IF YOUR DISK DOESN'T WORK

● First, try the process again, once again making sure you've removed extra peripherals the program may not 'like'.

● If it's only one of the programs on your disk that doesn't work, not the whole thing, try phoning our new COVERDISK HELPLINE. Call 0274 736990 and ask for Sam Hiah.

● If either of your disks fails to load, then pop 'em in a padded envelope to this address:

AMIGA POWER Disk 15 Returns, Tib Plc, 36-50 Adelaide Street, Bradford, BD5 OEA. Give Tib a couple of weeks, and you ought to receive a shiny, working new disk.

MENTAL IMA

Authors: Mental Image

Continuing our quest to bring you the very best in shareware PD, we've got an entire disk of the stuff to give you this month. You may remember Stuart's glowing words about *Mental Image Gamedisk 1* in his PD column a while ago (AP4 to be precise). Well, now the Mental Image boys are back again with not one, not two *(Oh, get on with it – Ed)*, but three (three!) fabulous shareware games for you, the reader.

Covering three of the most popular arcade genres – platformers, puzzlers and shoot-'em-ups – we're sure you'll agree that the *Mental Image Gamedisk 2* is worth, ooh, at least £3.00. And by a strange cosmic coincidence we'd like you (providing you feel that the disk is well worth the expense, of course) to send the boys a registration fee of £3.00 for the delight of using it. You don't have to do it, of course – you may think the disk is a bit crap and not worth anything at all really (though we very much doubt it). Much more likely, we feel, is that you'll feel it within your heart to send a fee of £5.00 – at which point the Mental Image team will post you a copy of their Gamedisk 1 as a thank you. (What a friendly industry this is, eh?) Of course, as we say, you don't have to send any cash, but if you do want to support your local PD team (and it's a good thing to do, we think) send your money to:

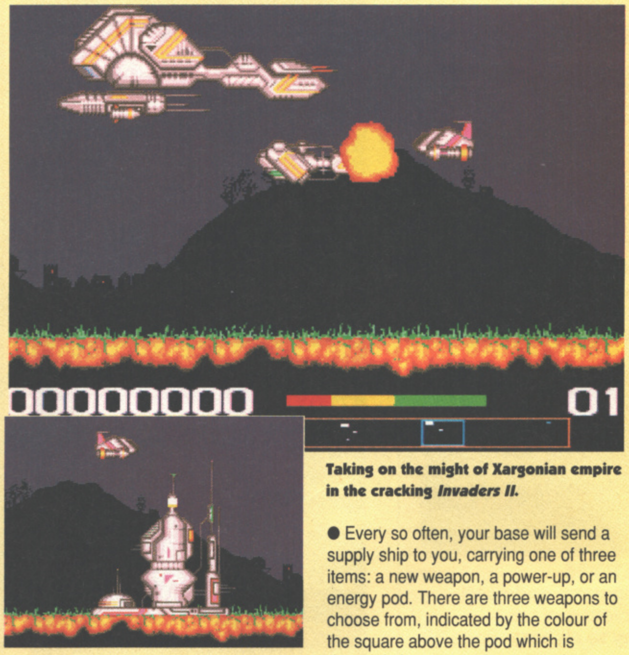
MENTAL IMAGE
16 MILE END AVENUE
HATFIELD DONCASTER
SOUTH YORKSHIRE DM7 6AU

● While you're at it, why not drop us a line here at the AMIGA POWER offices and let us know what you think of having Shareware on the cover disk? If you like the idea we might just do it again...

LOADING MENTAL IMAGE DISK 2

The loading instructions for this (and indeed, this month's other) disk you'll find over on the left of the page there, but before we start, just a quick word about the loader. You may think that your Amiga is doing ST impressions here, but don't worry – after a few moments the title screen will appear. Click on the mouse button, and an options screen will materialise, featuring a book in the centre of the screen. By pushing the joystick left and right it's possible to turn the pages, thus highlighting one of the three games. Simply press the joystick fire button to select the required one, give it a few moments to load, and away you go. (Easy, eh?) Now on with the show... ●

INVADERS II



Taking on the might of Xargonian empire in the cracking *Invaders II*.

You want simple scenarios? You got 'em! In *Invaders II*, you have been given the task of stopping the Xargonian motherships from reaching your base. This is achieved by flying over a planet surface in your craft and, erm, blasting hell out of the motherships and smaller alien escort craft. The motherships have strong shields which will take several shots to destroy – and that's just at the beginning! You actually get progressively stronger motherships on each level, while the game will continue until you run out of energy, or until a mothership reaches your base.

And that's all there is to the game really, except for a few quick hints, and, of course, the controls:

INVADERS II HINTS'N'TIPS

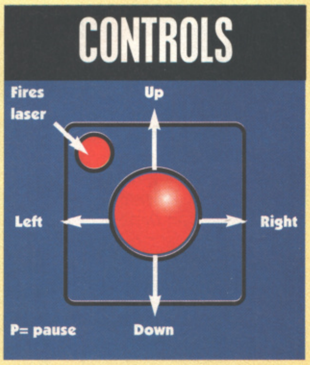
● If the smaller Xargonian escort ships reach your base then your long-range scanner will be destroyed. This won't end the game, but will make it very difficult for you, so keep an eye out for the little beggers.

● Every so often, your base will send a supply ship to you, carrying one of three items: a new weapon, a power-up, or an energy pod. There are three weapons to choose from, indicated by the colour of the square above the pod which is dropped. A power-up increases the efficiency of the current weapon, and the energy pods increase your energy level by half.

IT'S THAT SIMPLE?

Yes, it's that simple. Just fly up, down, left, right and fire. P pauses the game, and ESQ quits. ●

CONTROLS



ARE SPECIAL

GE GAME DISK 2

SATU

The second sweet and tasty treat we've got for you on the Mental Image disk is Satu, a game of strategy featuring a play area divided into nine blocks. The blocks are placed in a 3x3 grid, with each block either 'on' or 'off'. At the start of each level the computer will generate a random pattern of blocks, and it's your job to move them around until they match the pattern shown at the bottom of the screen. To do this, you must click on a block, which will affect one or more of the others – turning them on if they were off, or (indeed) off if they were on.

BLOCKING TACTICS

After each six levels, the rules governing how one block affects others will change. Here's a bit of a hint to get you going though: for the first six levels, clicking on one block will only affect the state of one other block. That should be enough of a clue to keep you going, but if you find you're in real trouble it's also possible to select trainer mode, which lets you see just how each block will be affected. (It's only for wimps though.)

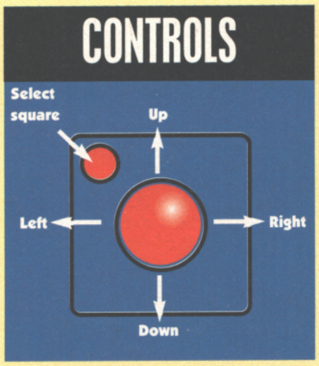
SIX GO MAD IN THE ORIENT

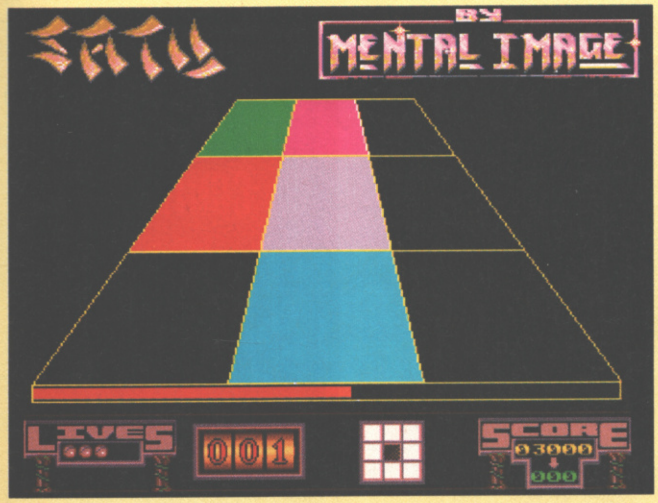
That's not all there is to the game though – every six levels you'll find yourself presented with a memory-test bonus stage. What happens here is a number of symbols are shown on-screen, and after a short time covered up. The computer then reveal the symbols one at a time, challenging you to remember where the matching one is – the more pairs you match up, the higher the bonus for the next six levels.

Satu can be played via the mouse or joystick. It's also possible to toggle between sound FX and music, start the game at any six-level point, and to alter the number of lives available. All of these are defined from the main options screen.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE WE SHOULD KNOW?

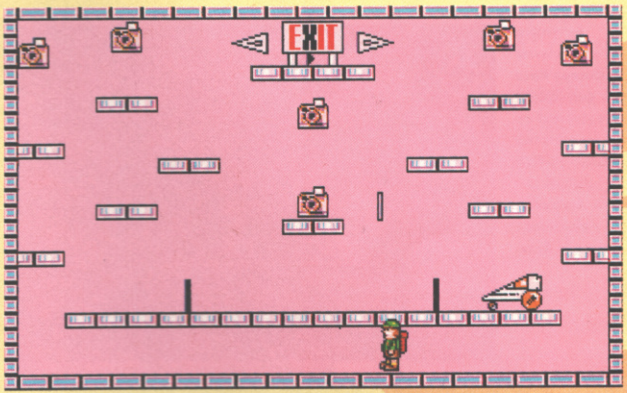
No, not really. ●





Ancient philosopher, he say, "Bloody hell, that's tough. I think I'll try the trainer mode."

WILLY IN THE CASTLE OF DREAMS



Knee deep in violent bodies – hey, wait a minute! Wasn't that last month's caption?

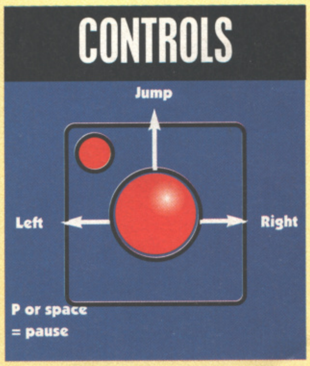
This one's a platform game, and here's the plot: Willy was walking home through the woods one day after a meeting of the Sunny Willow Cub Scouts, when he took a wrong turning and ended up outside an old castle. Something strange happened then, and Willy fell asleep.

Time passed, and when he eventually awoke, Willy realised that he'd been transported inside the building. Seemed the castle was actually owned by the wizard Ozzy, who'd been hanging round for quite some time waiting for someone just like Willy to chance along and help him out with a little task. Ozzy had been unable to sleep for over 100 years, you see, as every night his dreams were plagued by all manner of strange events.

WHERE IT GETS REALLY SILLY

So here's the game: you play the part of Willy in his task to help Ozzy by surviving 20 dream levels. During each dream you will have the opportunity to collect dream prizes, but will also be chased by dream baddies, who will wake you if they touch you (and, of course, you are only allowed to wake up a limited number of times). As progress is made you will be awarded parts of a space suit – collect all five pieces and after the 20th dream you will enter the reactor room, where the power source of the dream baddies can be shut down. Failure to collect all five pieces of the suit before going into the reactor room will have fatal consequences.

From the main menu, there are four options to select. F1 will alter the number of lives, F2 will let you enter your name, F3 enables a password to be entered while F4 toggles the introduction screens on and off. Give the pause mode a try – there's another top game in there for you to try your hand at (!) – while pressing either mouse button will return you to the main menu. ●



AMEGA RACE

Authors: Ad Soft & Leopold Soft.

This month's dose of top PD sees the long-awaited resurrection of another old classic. Like *Asteroids*, this is a game of inertia, blasting and the need to stay calm.

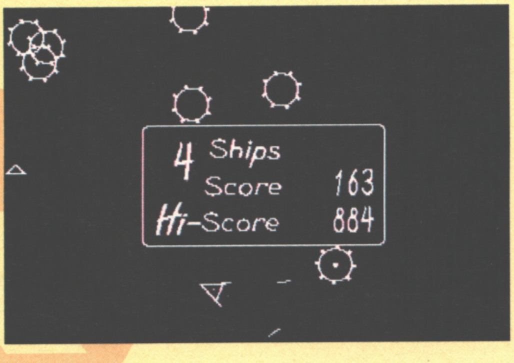
Yep, once more we've dragged another piece of black-and-white excellence from the pits of coin-op history, from the days when men were men and arcade games really had to be bloody playable (not just dreamy looking) to attract the punters.

DO THE RESURRECTION SHUFFLE

So what's it all about then, eh? Simple. On each screen you'll get the chance to jet around in a groovy little fighter, blasting at cogs (yes, cogs). Of course, these are space cogs, and, as such, are damn tricky fellows. Interesting points to note about them there space cogs are:

1. Some space cogs have dots in their centre – these are worth more points.
2. Some space cogs shoot back. Avoid.
3. Some space cogs drop mines. These mines are lethal to touch, but can be blasted out of the way.
4. Some space cogs spawn little spinning nasties. These nasties will also drop mines in your path.
5. Some space cogs will move faster, and some will chase the player.
6. All space cogs must die!

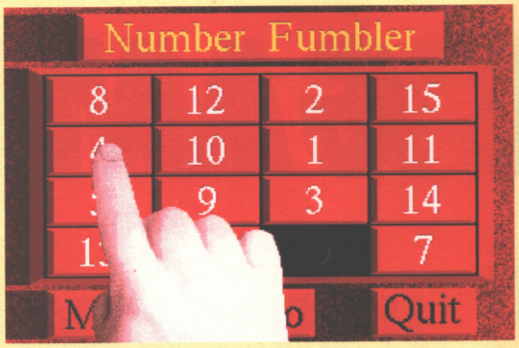
A level is completed when all nasties are destroyed. To control the craft use the joystick for left, right, thrust and fire. ●



Forgotten arcade classic *Omega Race* gets the PD treatement on this month's top AMIGA POWER disk. If you liked *Asteroids*, you'll love *Amega Race*.

NUMBER FUMBLER

Authors: David Alves.



Fumbling with numbers in *Number Fumbler*. Remember those 'take anywhere' sliding block puzzles? Well, now you can play one on your totally un-portable Amiga!

Our second piece of PD perfection is a computerised version of these maddeningly addictive sliding block games. Yeah, so it sounds like a ridiculously simple thing to transfer to your all-powerful Amiga, but just try playing the thing. We guarantee you'll be:

1. Hooked
2. Stumped.

SLIDE IT ON HOME

Once loaded, the game will display a 4x4 grid of numbers, all in correct order from top left, to bottom right. As you can see the spare space is after the number 15. Remember this layout – this is what you've got to get back to.

When you're ready, use the mouse to place the on-screen hand over the mix button (at the lower end of the screen). The numbered tiles will then begin to slide around frantically. When they stop, they'll all be jumbled. The task is then to get them all back in order.

To move a tile, just click on it with the hand. If it's next to the blank area, then it will slide over to the space, thus leaving a space behind it.

MANIC, SOUND, PANIC!

If a screen looks impossible, then it may well be. (Not all of these things can actually be completed, y'know?) If it looks insolvable, then we're afraid you'll just have to select the quit option, and reboot. Incidentally, if you fancy taking a peek at a digitised photo of *Number Fumbler* programmer David Alves, then click on the 'who' button with on-screen hand. Now steady on, girls. Don't stare at that scrummy piccy for too long! ●

GALACTIC

Author: Stavros Fasoulas
Publisher: To be confirmed

Galactic comes to you direct from new Finnish programming team Terramarque, headed up by one-time C64 hero Stavros Fasoulas. (Remember him?) The only simple thing about *Galactic* is that it's the biggest head-trip you're ever likely to find on your Amiga. Expect to go more than a little bit wibbly as you play it...

So how can we possibly describe the game? Well, imagine, just for the sake of argument, a cross between *Robotron* and and *Rainbow Islands*. That's sort of what it's like, but it doesn't tell the whole story – *Galactic* isn't that easy to pin down. Which leaves us with a bit of a problem – do we go on for hours trying to make the gameplay really clear, or do we let you dive straight in and try to make head or tail of it on your own? We thought about this for a while and then decided the best thing to do would be to give you some instructions, which you're free to use or ignore as you will. Here goes...

The first thing to grasp is that you control a king who can move around a wrap-around, scrolling play area at will. The fact that it's wrap-around means that the floor is also the ceiling.

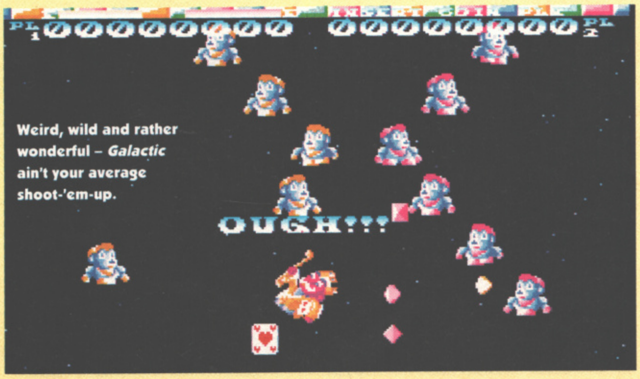
The next thing to grasp is that there is actually a purple king and an orange king, each with his own energy level (energy is continuously drained from the currently controlled king, or lost if you collide with a meanie, which we'll come to in a moment). It's possible to switch between kings (when energy is running low on the current king) by finding the miniature king in the play area and running into him.

Still know what we're talking about? Okay, back to the meanies. These guys run around, colliding with the currently controlled king (thus depleting valuable energy). The player can fight back with playing cards however, which fly out, trapping the bad guys. Walking into a trapped meanie will increase the energy level of a king. Some bad guys are orange (and so increase the orange king's energy level), while some are purple (and can be used to boost the purple king's energy). Time is of the essence, because the two teams are always warring with each other.

(Phew.) And there's yet more. If trapped meanies are not collected they fall to the floor and turn into a toy. Shooting the floor or the ceiling (they are, as we said, one and the same) will also create toys, and collecting them will give the player extended time on a level. Other items – things like bubble gum, ice cream and coins – have other uses too, but no, we're not going to tell you what they are.

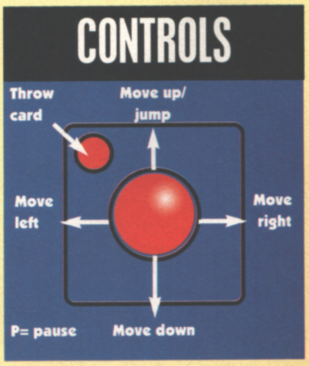
Right, that's about it. There's no room left to tell you the meanies also lob missiles at the poor king (so keep moving) and there's no space to tell you to watch out for the bonus platform level (you'll know it when you get there) or the legendary love chase.

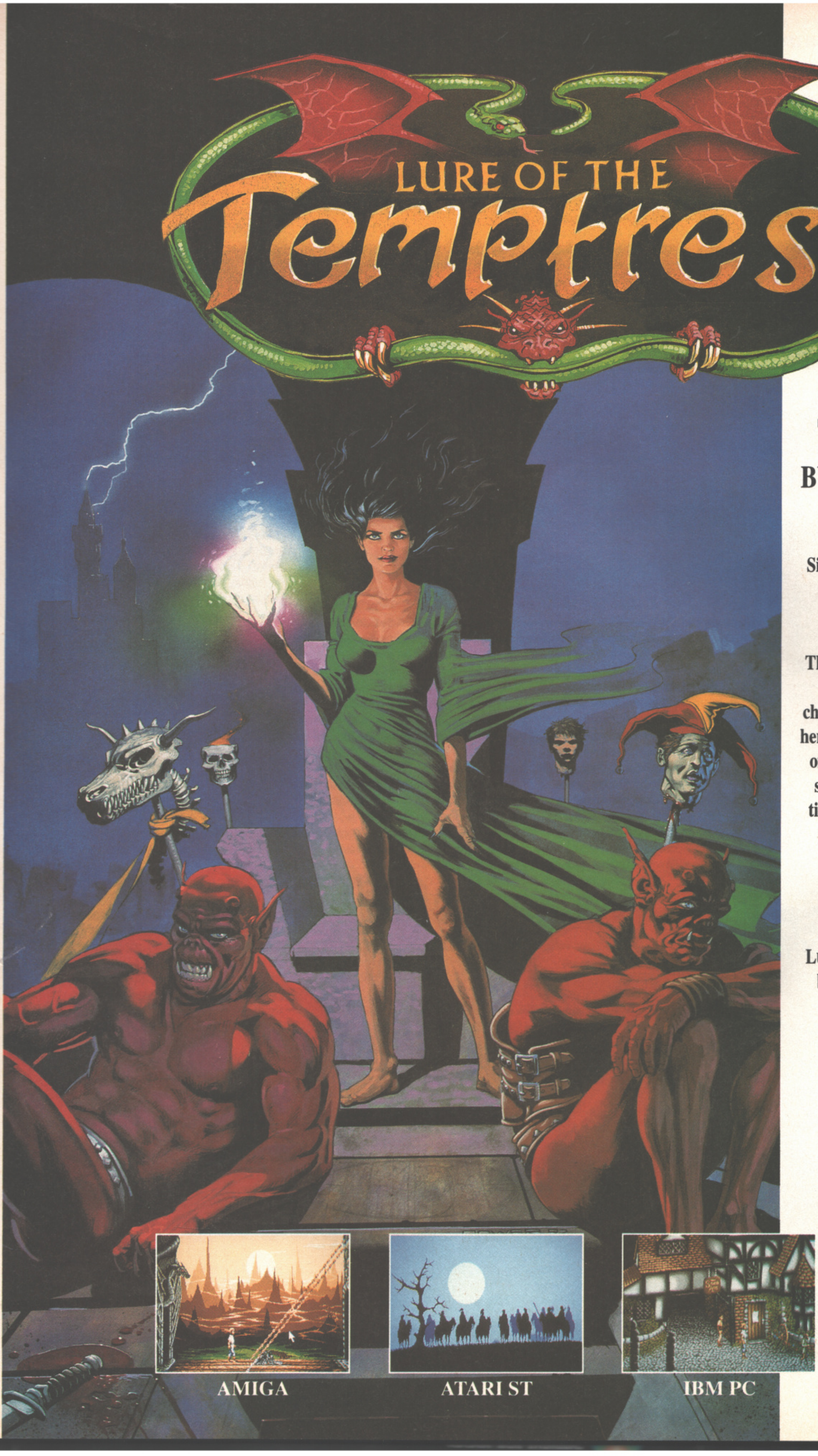
This exclusive playable demo comes complete with eight levels of spaced-out excellence, while the finished version is expected to contain more than the Empire State Building. We'll give you more details as we get them. ●



Weird, wild and rather wonderful – *Galactic* ain't your average shoot-'em-up.

CONTROLS





LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL...

Sick and tired of playing the same old, sterile, graphic adventure?

Then envisage a new playing experience where each character can go about his or her own affairs independently of your actions, where each scenario is different every time you return to it, where you can experience "real world" environments.

It's happened.

LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS has been developed using the 'Revolutionary' Virtual Theatre™ system.

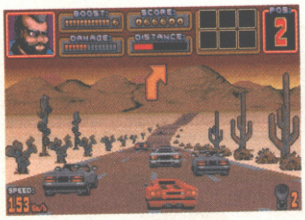
virtual theatre

REVOLUTION

Virgin GAMES

TRUE STORIES

CRAZY LIKE A FOX

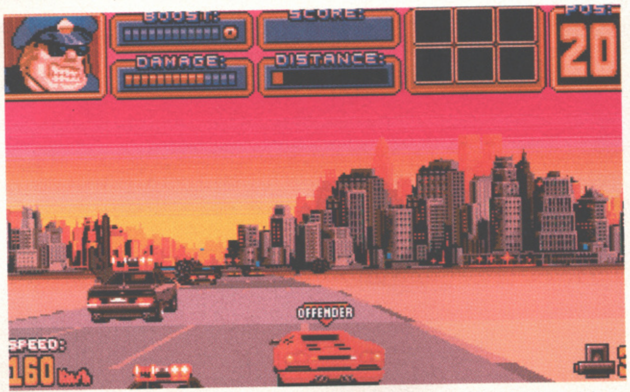


Hey! Remember *Crazy Cars I* and *II*? Well, now forget them again, because *Crazy Cars III* is a completely different beast (honest). Indeed, *Crazy Cars III* could well be surprise hit of the Amiga racing wars.

Why's that then? Well, for a start it's got more in common with Gremlin's *Lotus* games than its predecessors, and even more in common with movies like The Gumball Rally and The Cannonball Run. By competing in four divisions of illegal races across America (14 races in each division), the player pits his driving skills and his Lamborghini Diablo against a whole bunch of local amateur drivers as well as 20 professional rivals.

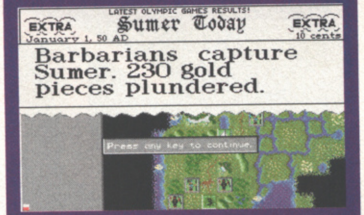
Goodies to watch out for include the ever-present police to dodge, on-road objects to smash into, loads of upgrades for your car, the chance to bet with other competitors, the fastest 3D graphics we've ever seen on a racing game (it's possible to hit 400 km/h!) and, best of the lot, a high degree of artificial intelligence – it's amazing to watch a whole bunch of computer-controlled vehicles slow down just before a speed trap, for instance, then see one get impatient and speed off, closely followed by the irate cops.

You'll have to wait until the next issue (fingers crossed) for a full review, but from what we've played so far, it'll easily be worth the wait. Now if only they could have managed a decent two-player mode...



Though you can easily see from these screenshots just how wonderfully colourful *Crazy Cars III* is, you can't tell how fast and fluid it moves. And the answer is 'very'.

EMPIRE AND STATES BUILDING



LATEST OLYMPIC GAMES RESULTS!
EXTRA Sumer Today EXTRA
January 1, 50 AD 10 cents
Barbarians capture Sumer. 230 gold pieces plundered.
Press any key to continue.

Fans of all-action arcade-style games may well be left cold, but there's a sizeable community of more serious, quite possibly older, Amiga games players who live for things like this – Sid Meier's celebrated PC game *Civilization*, which is just about to arrive on the Amiga.

The storyline goes something like this – we're in 4000 BC, and the biggest groups of people around are small, nomadic tribes. As you'd probably expect by now – post *Populous, Sim City* and Meier's own *Railroad Tycoon* – you're in charge, with the task of building this tribe, through trade, conquest and (ahem) breeding, up into a civilization fit to rule the world.

Don't balk at this, but the game also has an educational element to it too – not only do you get to discover and (hopefully) control new inventions (The Wheel, Alphabet, Mapping and, if you get that far, The Bomb), you also get to compete with rival world leaders, including such historical types as Napoleon, Julius Caesar and Alexander The Great. Look for it in the shops in early July, and an in-depth review next issue.

MICROPROSE BUY VEKTOR

Vektor Grafix, solid 3D specialists and creators of Virgin's soon-to-arrive *Shuttle*, Image Work's *The Killing Cloud*, Activision's *Fight Bomber*, Domark's *Star Wars* and others, has been bought lock, stock and barrel by MicroProse. By all accounts this isn't the first time a large software house has attempted to get control of the Leeds-based development house – rumour has it Activision tried a few years ago – but this time it's happened, in a move which on the one hand gives MicroProse a top-notch 3D development team based in this country, and on the other allows Vektor a far greater degree of financial security than before.

B-17 Flying Fortress, due for a late summer release, will be the new partnership's first game, but it certainly won't be the last...

- This isn't the only expansionist move from MicroProse recently. The company has recently opened another in house development, this time based in Manchester, using local programming talent. Manchester is, of course, one of the big centres for game creators in this country.

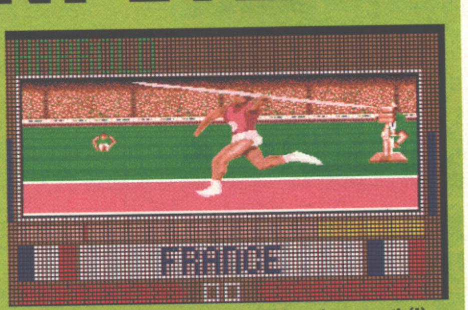
***B-17* – the sexiest flight sim planned this year?**

HEAVEN SENT EVENTS

Due for completion any day now by programming team Teque, Psygnosis' *Carl Lewis Challenge* will be the first ready of the two Olympics-related games due on the Amiga this summer (read about Ocean's efforts on page 12). Built up of five events for between one to four players, *Carl Lewis* is initially most striking for the fluid animation of the athletes – they've apparently been repainted from actual digitised footage.

However, there's more to the game than the visuals – it offers either strategy, arcade, or full simulation modes of play as you lead 10 athletes through five weeks of intensive training, attempting to get them in the right state of fitness for each event. Then, once into the actual Olympics, each athlete must qualify in five heats before going through to the event finals.

The biggest innovation the game offers, though, is the way it handles multi-player games. What happens is it pits each player against computer simulations of the others. The second player gets to race against a recording of the first player's performance, as well as computerised approximations of the other players, while the third player competes against the two recordings, and so on. With three different control options, it's possible to opt for a joystick intensive game, or one that relies more on timing skills. With five events – the 100m, the hurdles, the long jump, the high jump and the javelin – *Carl Lewis* is smaller than Ocean's effort, but it looks the stronger, visually. The game will be released within days of you reading this (at £25.99), but while you're waiting why not check out the *Carl Lewis* compo on page 91? You might just win a bike!



With technical input from Fatima Whitbread apparently(!), *Carl Lewis Challenge* promises stunning graphics and spot-on event accuracy. In fact, there's Fatima now!

TEAM 17 GO INTO OVERDRIVE

We've got a full Things To Come report on *Assassin* – one of the most exciting new projects from Wakefield-based Team 17 – in a couple of pages, but here are some of the other things we can expect to see from the group who are shaping up to be perhaps the hottest new team of the year...

● *Overdrive*, Team 17's new arcade racing game, is a project of their Croydon based development team. Headed by Junior McMillan (code) and Steve Middleton (graphics), work began on the title at the end of March. Up until then the same team had been developing a new pinball game, but, to the frustration of all concerned, the game was rethought and then cancelled in the wake of the successful *Pinball Dreams*, a 21st Century Entertainment game – Martyn Brown, the company's director, felt that "there was no place in the market for another pinball game". The good news was, however, that with the scrapping of 'Pinball', development on *Overdrive* could commence. We asked Martyn Brown what he expects of the game.

"*Overdrive* is going to be an amalgam of a lot of styles that we've always wanted to bring into our games" – Martyn at this point lists his favourite racing games, which include *Hot Rod* and *Super Sprint* – "the idea being to mix a lot of different driving styles, and allow you to play in various different modes. So in arcade mode, for example, you're given a set car and a set objective. We're still considering a two player mode, but it'll probably need a two computer link."

Martyn insists that the game will "offer a myriad of novel and exciting features." Indeed, special features listed so far include 10 different terrains and tracks, and a varied array of race track vehicles – including Formula 1 cars, stock cars, street cars, trucks and motor bikes, which all sounds good to us...

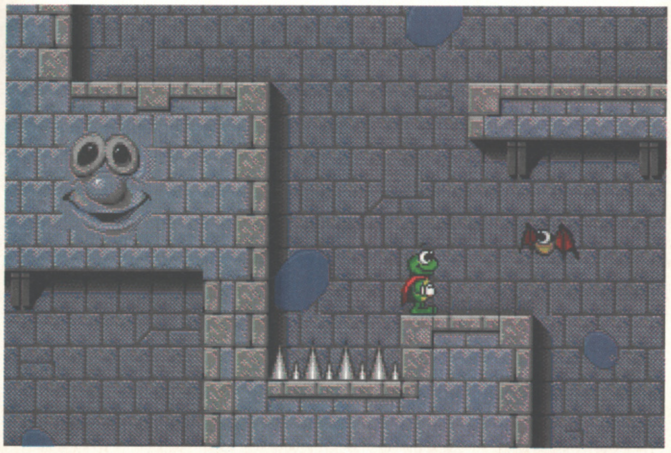
● Sweden is a long way from Croydon, or Wakefield for that matter, but that's where you'll find the second of Team 17's new development duos. *Superfrog*, as their game is known, is being developed by Andreas Tadic and Rico Holmes, both of *Alien Breed* and *Project X* fame. It's very early days as far as this one's concerned – Andreas and Rico are still putting the basic game engine together – but we asked what's going to be different about the game.

Well, for a start it's going to have a very odd soundtrack – Team 17 originally wanted Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer to do sampled voices for the game, though the idea has since fallen through – while the visuals will also be on the, erm, 'unusual' side. Other details are pretty vague at the moment, but what we can tell you is that it's an arcade platform game featuring two froggy pals called Spud and Dudley. The game features six levels of enchanted lands for you to discover, each consisting of four sub levels, and Team 17 believe it could be their biggest hit to date.

● And then there's the one that many of you will be waiting for – *Alien Breed 2*. The sequel, known by Team 17 as 'The Special Edition', will be developed by the same team as it's predecessor – Sweden-based Andreas and Rico – once they've finished *Superfrog*.

Alien Breed 2 doesn't pick up where the first game left off, however, but is instead set quite a few years into the future. Martyn tells us that "the story for *Alien Breed 2* has already been written. The game will be an enhanced version of its predecessor, with a lot more free roaming and larger levels." Expect to see more variety to the enemies and a greater range of missions too. Expect also a two player option, 32 colours used throughout, it to be 1 meg only, and a 1993 release – so don't hold your breath.

● Now turn to our new Shape Of Things To Come section for a full Work In Progress report on perhaps the most impressive of the new games, *Assassin*...



Superfrog **– erm, well, it looks a bit boring at the moment, but they haven't finished it yet.**

MAXIS FOR MINDSCAPE

The creators of *Sim City*, *SimEarth* and *SimAnt* have now split from Ocean in this country, and will in the future be releasing their 'games' through Mindscape instead. The next new product is *A Train* – a financial simulation based on rail links between cities – though when, or indeed if, it will ever appear on the Amiga is seriously in doubt. More news to come...

STUMPED? THEN YOU NEED...

Stuck on a computer game? We'd normally recommend The Last Resort (with Jonathan Davies), but here's another option – Corish's Computer Games Guide (3rd Edition), which features 750 pages of game hints across all formats, all for a mere £14.95. Worth thinking about anyway...

RACE FOR THE NEW WORLD

We keep hearing of battles between the Columbus film makers, but exactly the same thing is happening in the Amiga world too, and that's even before anyone steps into the fray with a Columbus film license. This very issue features one Columbus game (*Discovery*), and Domark are planning another for September. Called simply *Columbus*, it's a strategy/adventure game developed by *'Nam* author Matthew Stibbe, so a fairly in-depth treatment of the subject is more or less guaranteed.

OOOPS! DEPARTMENT

Don't know how it happened, but somehow we got the Suncom phone number wrong in last issue's joystick feature. It's actually 0453 753565 – apologies to the owner of the number we printed last month, who apparently got bugged by oodles of calls from people wanting to know where they could buy an Analogue Plus...

CRIB SHEETS

audiogenic

AUDIOGENIC

Contact: Audiogenic, Unit 27, Christchurch Industrial Centre, Wealdstone, Harrow HA3 8NT.

History: Software publisher Audiogenic was founded in 1985 by the team of Peter Calver, Pearl Wellard and Martin Maynard, though today only Calver remains – it shouldn't be confused with an earlier Audiogenic company which used to duplicate cassettes back in the early '70s.

The origins of the current Audiogenic, however, date back to 1978, when Peter Calver and Pearl Wellard started set up a company called Supersoft, producing games for the Commodore 64. It was this company that was eventually to mutate into the current Audiogenic, making it one of the longest surviving software houses in the industry.

People: Audiogenic employs 19 people full time at the moment, with all except two involved directly in software development, in one way or another.

Best known of the development teams used by the company are Denton Designs, a group who've been around 10 years, and, like Psygnosis, were founded by ex-Imagine people. Ally Noble and John Heap run Denton, while the graphics side is in the hands of Herman Serrano, best known for his work on *Weird Dreams*. Programmer Graham Blighe, a veteran of games on seven different computer formats, including writing all five versions of *Emlyn Hughes International Soccer* (!) and the coin-op version of *Loopz*, is another regular.

Greatest Success: For Peter Calver this boils down to "staying in business a lot longer than anyone else," which is fair enough, though if he had to narrow things down to one game it's be *Emlyn Hughes International Soccer*: "It was easily our biggest seller."

Greatest Failure: Calver considers this question in financial terms: "Our most costly game to date has been *Super League Manager*, which was due to be released in November 1989 – and still isn't in the shops even now! One reason for that is that we kept coming up with new ideas for it, and implementing them all took time. Anyway, it's just been finished now, three years and £100,000 later, and we think it's going to be well worth the wait."

Typical Game: "It would have to be a sports game, because that's our speciality these days. When we do a sports game we aim to make it the best, and we'll work on it until that's true."

How they see themselves: "We see ourselves as a company that really cares about the games that it produces – and one that gets very frustrated when we bring out a game like *Exile* (voted by AP as the reviewers' game of the year!) and it still doesn't sell!"

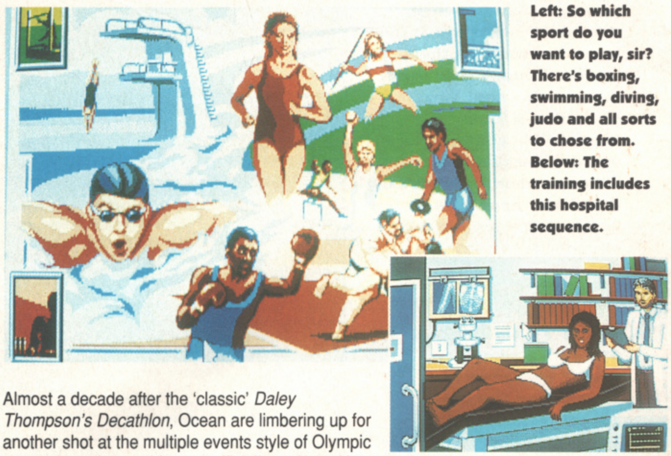
How do other people see them: "They respect us for the products that we produce quite often, but we're really too small for most of the big software houses to worry about, competition wise."

Product development: "We try and design games properly at the beginning, so we know exactly what's required of them, but it doesn't always work out. When you want the best you have to accept that changes must be made, and you must be prepared to abandon a project if it is not working out."

Final Word: "We're going to be releasing *World Class Soccer* very soon. It's been designed specifically for the one meg Amigas – what we've done would be impossible to emulate on an inferior setup – and we've very proud of it indeed." Look for a review very soon.

World Class Soccer ***– comes complete with side-on and overhead views (pictured).***

VIVA ESPAGNIA!



Left: So which sport do you want to play, sir? There's boxing, swimming, diving, judo and all sorts to chose from. Below: The training includes this hospital sequence.

Almost a decade after the 'classic' *Daley Thompson's Decathlon*, Ocean are limbering up for another shot at the multiple events style of Olympic game, the only one this year officially endorsed by the Barcelona Olympics people, and trading under the provisional title of *Espagnia Olympics '92*.

So what difference does having the official licence really mean? Well, for a start, it means Ocean have been able to include a realistic event diary for the entire competition, and include full (and, apparently, accurate) stats for the British Olympic team. It also means they get to use the inevitable cute animal mascot, though opinion is split as to whether that's actually a good thing or not.

The other thing that an Olympic game traditionally means, of course, is lots of joystick waggling, and never ones to let the side down, Ocean have included some here. Events include discus, hammer, shot, long jump, triple jump, high jump, pole vault, various running events, hurdles, steeplechase, and javelin – you can guess which ones are the wagglers yourself – while training team members for the individual events is also included.

While the pictures you see here are actually taken from PC version, the Amiga one is likely to be very similar. Better get into training now – it'll be out in time for the Games...

ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL

Domark's *Rampart*, the Tengen castle conquest game beloved of the Bitmap Brothers (it's rumoured), is due for imminent release – probably some time in August. Make no mistake though – this game has very little at all in common with EA/ Interplay's similar sounding *Castles*. Instead it's a much faster three-player action game, adding a *Tetris*-like wall rebuilding exercise (you have to rotate various-sized bricks to fit the gaps) between boughts of offensive cannon fire. Believe us, it's lots of fun.

MILLIONS WILL DIE IF YOU ARE WEAK...

Remember *Megatraveller 1*? It was reviewed in an early AMIGA POWER (quite positively actually – 88 percent in issue 4) but at the time we all assumed the '1' was just wishful thinking. Not so, apparently – here's 2, subtitled *Quest For The Ancients*, and looks set to be bigger and better than the first.

Space pirates, over 100 details worlds to explore, a mysterious ancient civilization to uncover, alien artifacts to unearth and a threat to the lives of millions – it's all here. Fans of science fiction role playing should be in their element – look for a release any day now at £29.99 on the Empire label, and a review in our next issue.

Pilot Tom
Doc Holliday
Inoth
Chief Ra
Tanya
More
Cancel
Day 174

***Megatraveller 2*: bigger and better than the first game, and packed with things to uncover. Could it be the best space RPG yet?**

AMIGA POWER RECOMMENDS

Actually, this month we recommend nothing at all. We didn't like any of last month's games. Not a single one. Well, okay, except maybe for these...

LEGEND
(Mindscape)

Every month we bung a load of RPGs in AMIGA POWER Recommends, tell you they're the most groovy accessible fun around, and each month we then watch as thousands and thousands of you sit resolutely at home and play *Project X*. This time, if you don't go out and buy a copy of this fabulous game within the next four weeks, we're going to do a complete issue about nothing but *Rainbow Islands*. You've been warned.

THE ADDAMS FAMILY
(Ocean)

Okay, if you're looking for Nintendo's *Super Mario World* on the Amiga you won't find it in this super-slick, wildly addictive but simplistic platform romp, but if you crossed *The Addams Family* with *Harlequin* you wouldn't be far off at all. So, er, why not buy a copy of both, get your assembly language manual out and see if you can make yourself a fortune? Or something. Ahem.

FIRE & ICE
(Renegade)

You'd expect a game from the man who brought you *Rainbow Islands* to be something pretty special, and Andrew Braybrook doesn't disappoint with this lushly cute platform adventure game. It's packed to bursting with nice touches and lovely gameplay, but the best thing about *Fire And Ice* is that it's the game *Magic Pockets* really should have been in the first place. Beautiful, playable, and really rather lovable.

FLOOR 13
(Virgin)

Disturbingly plausible secret service simulator which has you discrediting, kidnapping, torturing and assassinating all manner of completely harmless and innocent civilians in the name of national security. Atmospherically rendered in black and white with the minimum of frills, *Floor 13*'s realism is its strength, but not at the expense of gripping gameplay. And yes, it really is all in played in black and white. Excellent stuff.

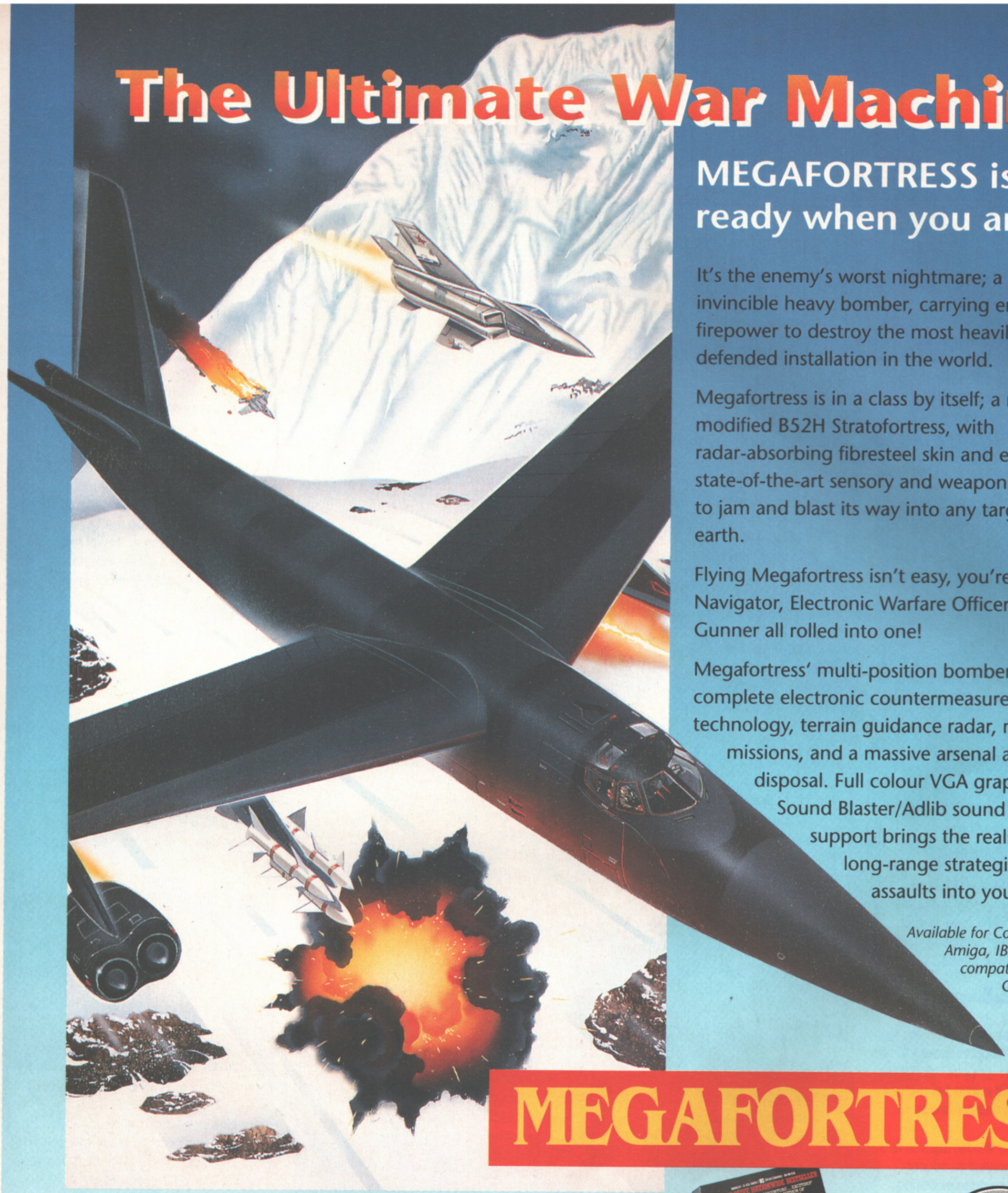
DIZZY'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURES
(Code Masters)

This one's excellent stuff too – it tells us in the title. This five-game compilation brings you addictive arcade games and tricky puzzlers as well as a couple of fine examples of the arcade adventure genre that made Diz the huge success story he is, and as such has to be seen as the best value-for-money this side of, well, a copy of AMIGA POWER. Thank you.

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER 2
(SSI/US Gold)

Okay, so it comes on several disks which access interminably and it's almost exactly the same as the first game with different monsters but very little in the way of actual new stuff, but the original was so much fun that more of the same doesn't really feel like such a bad deal. Weeks of fun then, but let's just hope they don't milk the formula for a third installment. Two's great fun, but three's a bore (or something).

The Ultimate War Machine



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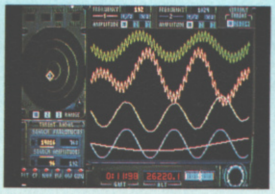
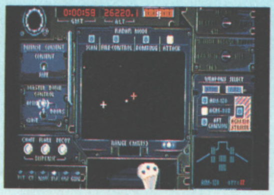
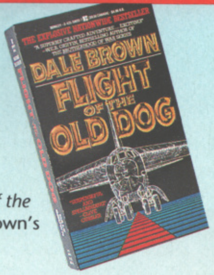


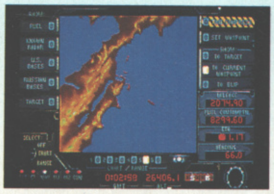
Electronic Countermeasures



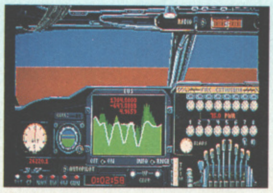
Offensive Weapons Station

Based on '*Flight of the Old Dog*', Dale Brown's best selling novel.





Navigator's Station-Global Display



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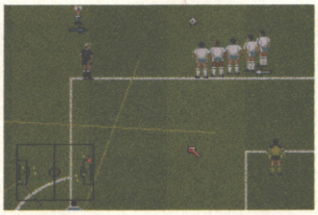
AMIGA POWER PENGUIN GALLUP CHARTS TOP 100

FOOTBALL CRAZY!

Well, what did you expect? It's football fever in the charts this month, with the first of the European Championship tie-ins pushing and jarring for the top slots. It's going to get worst before it gets any better too (for football haters, at least), with many of the big guns yet to enter the fray.

But who've we got so far? Well, US Gold make it to the number two with *The Manager*, while the Codies are not far off target with *First Division Manager*, a game that actually made it all the way to the top a couple of months ago. Another budget soccer release doing well at the moment is Gremlin's *Manchester United*, which is keeping the terraces happy at number 10, while Krisalis seem to be hitting the woodwork a bit with *John Barnes European Football* at 15.



***Barnesy*: if only he could reproduce (etc).**

Some of this will comes as little real surprise, of course, but we're always astonished at how well footy management games seem to do. So much so, in fact, that we thought a bit of investigation into *The Manager* might prove useful...

FOOTBALL MAD!

The Manager
New Entry, Number 2

Eye Of The Beholder II
High Riser, Number 6

For US Gold's Danielle Woodyatt, this is a fine result and "just shows that soccer sells very well." Indeed – but are boring old management games always so popular? "Hmm, that's a tricky one. To be honest, I think we're surprised that it's been so successful, but we're obviously very pleased that it has. It is, after all, a quality product and a very good package." German company Software 2000 spent over two years researching and developing the game, their first attempt at a management game as far as we know.

Of course, it's not all football games – US Gold are also doing pretty well with a representative of what's shaping up to be the summer's other big game type, the RPG. Many of you will have read our very positive review of *Eye Of The Beholder II* last month – this sequel to last year's biggest fantasy role playing success is a game fans have been waiting well over twelve months for, so it's no big surprise that it's doing so well.

★★★★★ Exceptional ★★★★★ Nearly there ★★★★ Very good ★★★ Has its moments ★★ Flawed ★ Dire

1 (2) **JOHN MADDEN AMERICAN FOOTBALL** Electronic Arts £29.99 ★★★★★
2 (NE) **THE MANAGER** US Gold £30.99 ★
3 (NE) **EPIC** Ocean £29.99 ★
4 (19) **FIRST DIVISION MANAGER** Code Masters £7.99 ★★
5 (1) **PROJECT X** Team 17 £25.99 ★★★
6 (27) **EYE OF THE BEHOLDER 2** US Gold £35.99 ★★★
7 (6) **RAINBOW ISLANDS** Hit Squad £7.99 ★★★★★
8 (4) **FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX** MicroProse £34.99 ★★★★★
9 (24) **F-16 COMBAT PILOT** Action 16 £9.99 ★★★
10 (18) **MANCHESTER UNITED** GBH £9.99 ★★★

11 (10) **SCOOBY-DOO AND SCRAPPY-DOO** Hi Tec Software £7.99 *****
12 (61) **JAMES POND** GBH 7.99 ***
13 (8) **LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE** GBH £7.99 *****
14 (3) **SPACE CRUSADE** Gremlin Graphics £25.99 ****
15 (NE) **JOHN BARNES EUROPEAN FOOTBALL** Krisalis £29.99 ***
16 (16) **NEW ZEALAND STORY** Hit Squad £7.99 *****
17 (9) **GOLDEN AXE** Tronix £9.99 **
18 (NE) **FANTASY WORLD DIZZY** GBH £9.99 ***
19 (71) **WACKY RACES** Hi Tec Software £7.99 ***
20 (NE) **DIZZY'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURES** Code Masters £24.99 ****
21 (32) **SIM ANT** Ocean £25.99 *
22 (54) **JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER** Virgin £29.99 *****
23 (5) **PINBALL DREAMS** 21st Century £25.99 *****
24 (RE) **WORLD CRICKET** Zeppelin £7.99 ***
25 (17) **ROBOCOP** Hit Squad £7.99 ****
26 (42) **OPERATION THUNDERBOLT** Hit Squad £7.99 ***
27 (RE) **LITTLE PUFF** Code Masters £6.99 ***
28 (NE) **TURRICAN 2** Kixx £7.99 ***
29 (11) **SHADOW WARRIORS** Hit Squad £7.99 *
30 (56) **WWF WRESTLEMANIA** Ocean £25.99 *
31 (15) **PACIFIC ISLANDS** Empire £29.99 ****
32 (26) **STRIDER** Kixx £7.99 ***
33 (7) **BLACK CRYPT** Electronic Arts £25.99 ****
34 (30) **GRAEME SOUNESS SOCCER MANAGER** Zeppelin £7.99 **
35 (21) **SPECIAL FORCES** MicroProse £34.99 **
36 (14) **SUPER OFF ROAD** Tronix £9.99 ****
37 (78) **PAPERBOY** Encore £7.99 **
38 (41) **BIRDS OF PREY** Electronic Arts £34.99 ****
39 (47) **TOYOTA CELICA RALLY** GBH £7.99 ***
40 (76) **UNTOUCHABLES** Hit Squad £7.99 **
41 (22) **BUBBLE BOBBLE** Hit Squad £7.99 ****
42 (RE) **QUATTRO FIGHTERS** Code Masters £7.99 **
43 (23) **ROBOCOD** Millennium £25.99 ****
44 (63) **THE QUEST OF AGRAVAIN** Code Masters £7.99 ***
45 (12) **POPULOUS 2** Electronic Arts £29.99 *****
46 (RE) **INTERNATIONAL NINJA RABBITS** Micro Value £7.99 ***
47 (RE) **SHADOW OF THE BEAST** Sizzlers £7.99 **
48 (60) **ULTIMATE GOLF** GBH Gold £9.99**
49 (RE) **ALTERED BEAST** Hit Squad £7.99 ***
50 (46) **ITALIA '90** Tronix £9.99 **
51 (68) **LOMBARD RAC RALLY** Hit Squad £7.99***
52 (RE) **PRO BOXING** Code Masters £7.99 *
53 (39) **CHASE HQ** Hit Squad £7.99 ***
54 (62) **MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE** Hit Squad £7.99 ****
55 (43) **ANOTHER WORLD** US Gold £25.99 *****
56 (57) **RICK DANGEROUS** Kixx £7.99 ***
57 (79) **AWARD WINNERS** Empire £25.99 ***
58 (97) **VIZ** Tronix £9.99 ***
59 (48) **A320 AIRBUS** Thalion £35.99 **
60 (73) **OH NO! MORE LEMMINGS** Psygnosis £19.99 **
61 (44) **PGA TOUR PLUS** Electronic Arts £29.99 *
62 (72) **HEIMDALL** Core Design £34.99 ****
63 (92) **GHOULS'N'GHOSTS** Kixx £7.99 **
64 (25) **HARLEQUIN** Gremlin Graphics £25.99 *****
65 (NE) **MAGICLAND DIZZY** Code Masters £7.99 ***
66 (NE) **HOVERSPRINT** Code Masters £7.99 *
67 (90) **MICROPROSE GOLF** MicroProse £34.99 ***
68 (96) **PARASOL STARS** Ocean £25.99 *****
69 (NE) **DIZZY COLLECTION** Code Masters £24.99 ***
70 (91) **ROBOCOP 3** Ocean £25.99 ***
71 (67) **MONKEY ISLAND** US Gold £29.99 ****
72 (RE) **DOUBLE DRAGON 2** Tronix £9.99 *
73 (RE) **INTERNATIONAL ICE HOCKEY** Zeppelin £7.99 **
74 (RE) **BATMAN: THE MOVIE** Hit Squad £7.99 **
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78 (55) **ALIEN BREED** Team 17 £24.99 ***
79 (RE) **COVERT ACTION** MicroProse £34.99 ***
80 (28) **POPULOUS** Star Performers £10.99 ****
81 (RE) **SOCCER STARS (COMP)** Empire £25.99 **
82 (NE) **YOGI'S BIG CLEAN UP** Hi Tec Software £7.99 **
83 (RE) **LEANDER** Psygnosis £25.99 ****
84 (NE) **EASY AMOS** Europress Software £34.99 ***
85 (RE) **Z-OUT** Kixx £7.59 **
86 (51) **SHADOWLANDS** Domark £29.99 ****
87 (13) **GIANTS OF EUROPE** Anco £7.99 ***
88 (RE) **BOARD GENIUS** Beau Jolly £29.99 **
89 (NE) **MICROPROSE SOCCER** Kixx £7.99 *
90 (RE) **LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE 2** Gremlin Graphics £25.99 *****
91 (81) **MIGHT AND MAGIC 3** US Gold £40.99 **
92 (RE) **KNIGHTS OF THE SKY** MicroProse £34.99
93 (37) **EUROPEAN SUPERLEAGUE** CDS £24.99 **
94 (31) **ADS** Action 16 £9.99 **
95 (NE) **COMBO RACER** GBH £7.99 ***
96 (RE) **INDY HEAT** Storm £25.99 ***
97 (50) **ULTIMA VI** Origin/Mindscape £30.99 *****
98 (NE) **PAPERBOY 2** Mindscape £25.99 **
99 (RE) **TERMINATOR 2** Ocean. £25.99 **
100 (49) **CASTLES** Electronic Arts £29.99 ***

We figure you must have some idea how the charts work by now, so briefly: they're put together by Gallup, they mix budgies and full pricers together, games are rated in stars, and now they're © McVities!

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER...

Epic
New Entry, Number 3

Sim Ant
New Entry, Number 21

We've been promising reviews of it for months, and at long last it's here – though not without its problems. Ocean's initially impressive (but see the review this issue) *Wing Commander*-influenced 3D blaster suffered from a deluge of returns in its first days on sale – seems there was a gremlin in one of the duplication machines used for disk one, resulting in lots of failures – though copies on sale now should be fine.

Despite these 11th hour troubles, however, the mood at Ocean remains enthusiastic. Ocean's Ken Lockley confirms "the game was a long time coming, but finally it has arrived and people aren't disappointed."

Ocean's own enthusiasm for the game has been matched by huge sales even on its first day. Northampton-based distributer Leisuresoft, for instance, are said to have started selling at 9.00am on the Monday, and had shifted 5,000 copies by 11.30. One reason for this has to be the length of time people have been kept waiting – demand for the game started over two years ago when the first magazine previews appeared!

***Epic*: brilliant to look at, less so to play.**

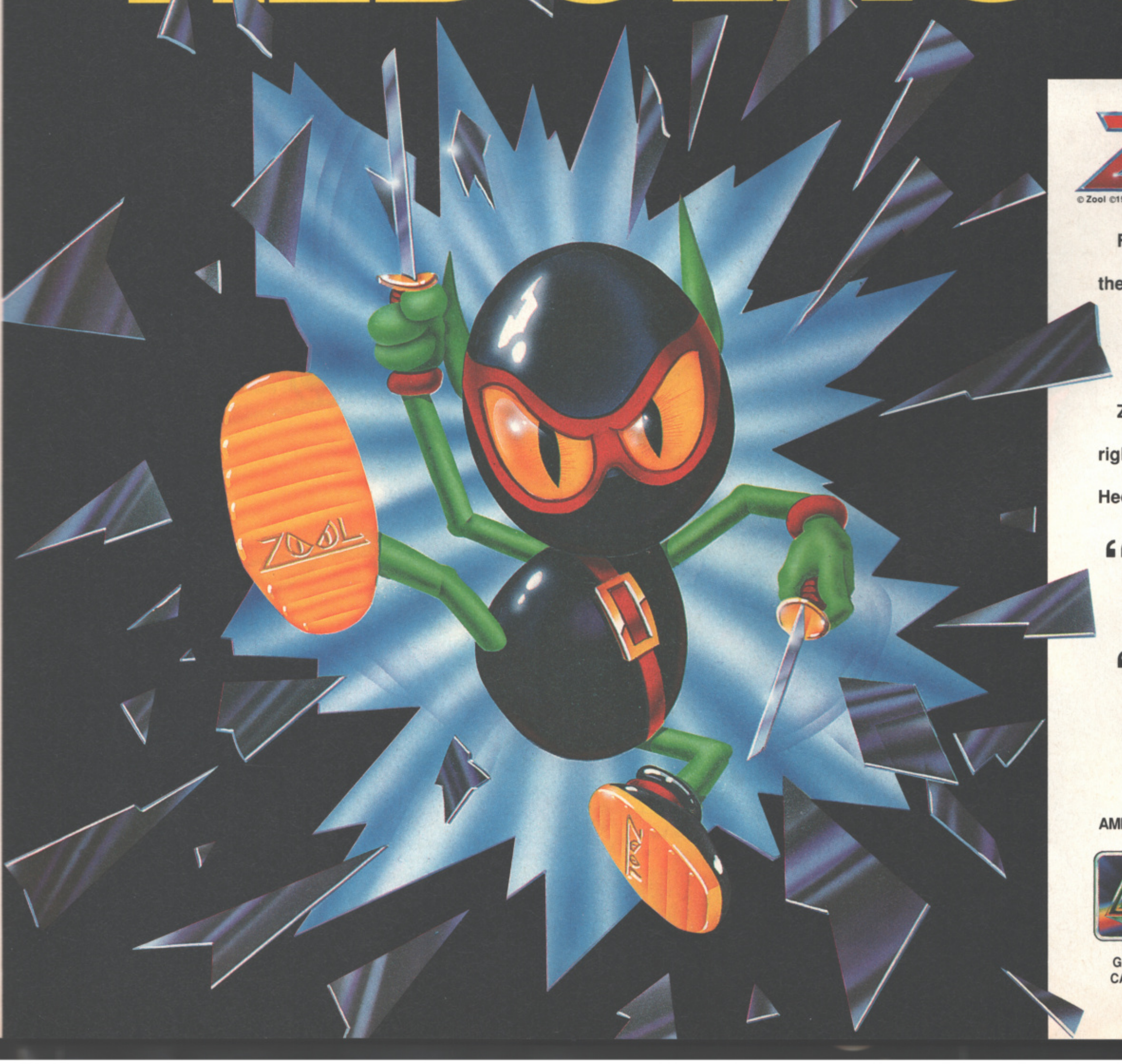
Such success certainly makes up for what might be seen as the disappointing showing made by *Sim Ant*, which has entered the charts at number 21. Ken is "initially disappointed with *Sim Ant*'s current position, but I think it's the type of game that will be a steady sell. It'll never set the charts on fire, but we expect it to filter through slowly, just like *Sim Earth*."

TOUGH TREATMENT FOR TANKS

Pacific Islands
Number 31

This is an odd one – we rate this game highly, and are surprised that it didn't peak a bit higher in the charts. Empire's Marissa Pauwells isn't worried though: "As a game it's great –we've had brilliant coverage in the press, which is great as this is the sort of product that re-emphasizes the company's new direction. *Pacific Islands* really shows what we can do." ●

BAD NEWS FOR HEDGEHOGS



ZOOL

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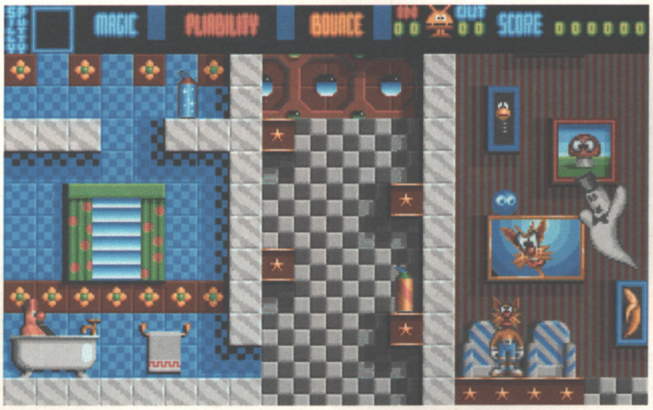
THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

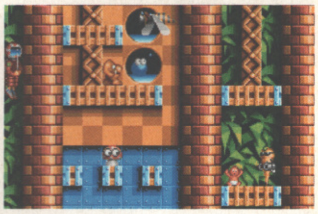
And there came a time when the normal Work In Progress stuff in the news pages just wasn't enough. That time is now...

Sooner or later we had to admit it – the news pages just aren't big enough to take the sheer amount of preview material we want to cram into every issue of AMIGA POWER. That being the case, something radical had to be done – something like this new regular preview section. Small previews will still appear in the news pages, but when we want to take a deeper look behind the scenes of a big name – or simply interesting – new game, this is the place to be. Welcome to The Shape Of Things To Come...

SILLY PUTTY

Game: Silly Putty
Publisher: System 3
Author: Phil Thornton
ETA: September





This is Dweezil's flat. The cat himself is to the far right of the picture, below his curious collection of pictures and a ghost. (The man in the bath on the far left breaks wind from time to time.) Dweezil makes himself known throughout Putty's quest – for instance, when he fails to collect certain bonuses, Dweezil bursts through the scenery to make a sarky comment.

Briefly: In February 1991 System 3 announced it was looking to publish cartridges for the Amiga, but it was not to be. The cost of producing them was far too high to be worthwhile – cartridges would cost over 10 times as much to manufacture as floppy disks, and the end result would be a product selling at three times the usual retail price.

The reason we mention this, of course, is that *Silly Putty* was to have been the first cartridge release. Now, though, it's very much a floppy product – and in every sense of the word. The eponymous star of the game is quite literally the most flexible character ever seen. Putty bounces and bends and stretches and can transform himself into all manner of different shapes – and it makes for a very unusual feeling game.

So what's the story? Well, an evil wizard called Dazzledaze has sent Putty's similarly squishy pals packing to Earth, from their home on Putty Moon, trapped in the form of bubble gum. They need help and fast. And so does Putty. To be more precise, he needs the help of the Bots, the natives of the planet Constructo which is orbited by Putty Moon.

The Bots can build a tower from Earth to Putty Moon, you see, so Putty can climb it to reach and defeat Dazzledaze. The thing is, the Bots only work by day – by night, some of them recharge their batteries, while the rest are a bit dense and wander around the construction randomly, often falling off the edges to their deaths. It's Putty's job to round them up in order that the tower erecting can continue, which gives the game a certain similarity to *Lemmings*. However, there's more to *Silly Putty* than simply saving lives. You see, you also have yourself to protect, as Dazzledaze has sent his cat, Dweezil, and his wicked servants down to the planet Constructo with the aim of putting a stop to Putty. How will it all end?

The creators speak: *Silly Putty* represents a new direction for System 3, a company recognised more for its oriental arcade adventures. "We will still be doing beat-'em-ups but there won't be any more *Ninja*," says System 3's Public Relations Manager Adrian Cale. "We can't take that character any further. Now we're concentrating on creating new characters."

Silly Putty designer and artist Phil Thornton is a big fan of Tex Avery cartoons, Screwball Squirrel in particular. With *Silly Putty* he's attempting to create a cartoon quality arcade experience. Music isn't evident while playing *Silly Putty* – instead there's a cacophony of sampled sounds (over one megabyte's worth, in fact) comprising cinematic spot effects, such as slurping and squelching and other Putty sounds, and plenty of talking (the voices are provided by actors).

Verdict so far: *Silly Putty* is one of those busy, surreal, slightly mad experiences perhaps best typified by the likes of this issue's *Wizkid* – it's certainly a game with a lot of character built in. Take the controls, for instance: not only is there the odd stretching way our hero moves, there's also Putty's remarkable repertoire of other skills to be taken into account – including the power to melt some creatures and absorb others. Putty actually moulds into the shape of up to three specific enemies per zone, at which point he can use their magic power or firearm features.

Definitely an intriguing and unusual game, then, with a number of strong features. What isn't clear yet – and is likely to remain so until we actually receive a finished copy – is how good it'll be to play. That's something we'll have to wait for.

● *GARY PENN*

ASSASSIN

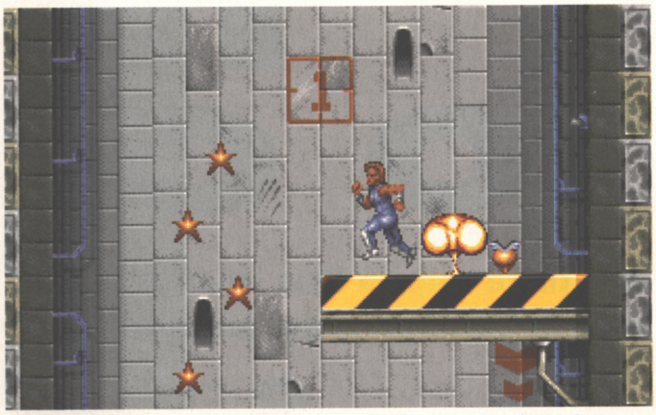
Game: Codename Assassin (working title – the game will probably end up simply called 'Assassin' on release.)
Publisher: Team 17
Authors: Dave Broadhurst and Haydn Dalton
ETA: November

Briefly: Readers of issue 13 will know we had our doubts about the long term playability of Team 17's last release, *Project X* (too hard and off-puttingly unfair to keep the interest just about sums it up), but it's undoubtedly been a major success – the lads from Wakefield are on a roll.

This here's the follow up – after producing an *IK+* style beat-'em-up, a *Gauntlet* lookalike and a scrolling blaster, the boys are now setting their sights on that other great arcade genre, the running-around-jumping-onto-platforms-and-killing-things game, perhaps best typified by Capcom's *Strider*. The plot has you, as a criminal leader in some future time where a gang war is fast brewing, setting out on a one man mission to destroy the rest of the underworld, and, in particular, kill the gangster Midan, the most powerful mob leader of them all.

Don't, however, get the impression that this is a *Godfather*-style game – instead it's spectacular arcade action all the way, particularly in its depiction of the central 'Assassin' character, who's one of the best running, jumping, climbing and somersaulting characters ever. To create such an athletic chap used up a massive 200K, a lot of it going to accommodate his 200 animation frames – but that doesn't mean there wasn't any room left for anything else. Indeed no – not only do you get a fine range of collectable weapons to pick up along the way (including a protective robosuit!), you also get five scrolling levels (totalling over 800 screens) to get through.

Most of your assassination mission takes place underground, but it doesn't start that way. Indeed, in the very first level you find yourself in a forest – your job here is to find a cave, break into the dome that's in there, then make your way through the construction site you'll find inside. This constitutes the second level, and provides a lot of opportunities for you to use all your acrobatic skills, bouncing off the cranes and machinery as you fight your way through to the high-tech-weaponry-filled third level. Next up is an asylum, filled with a vast range of trapped alien creatures, followed by the very futuristic fifth level where you'll go up against Midan himself.


The bits of *Assassin* that aren't like *Strider* are not unreminiscent of *Switchblade II*, funnily enough. Here we are on a lift, various baddies, power-ups and so on all around.

Throughout the game, an evil and varied cast will be out to stop you, ranging from knife throwers to mad dog handlers, armed with ferocious pit-bull terriers. From what we've seen of the game so far, and taking into account the slick arcade look Team 17 have managed to give all their stuff so far, it's a pretty safe best that *Assassin* will prove to be the best *Strider*-alike seen on the Amiga to date – big, smooth and varied enough to leave all other pretenders in its wake.

> **"Spectacular arcade action all the way"**

The creators speak:

Everything is still at a very early stage – Team 17 have only been working on the game for two and a half months so far. Ex-*Bubble Bobble* programmer Dave Broadhurst, who's written the code, is still developing how the various enemy characters will move at the time of writing, while graphic artist Haydn Dalton has only got as far as the background for level two. Their style of development is very much of the 'make it up as you go along' school – neither creator liking to stick to a set game structure or storyboard. They told us:

"We very much prefer to do it as we go along. The nearest we get to a storyboard is at the beginning of a level. We'll sit down and design a map, to sort out how each section relates to the rest. We're pretty loose after that though – we produce something much better if we don't have to stick to a certain story."

And, as if to prove their point, while we were talking in their office the boys noticed an interesting looking bug-like digger through the window. It was being used on a construction site across the road. "Hey, look at that," Dave shouted, "It'd be good to have in level two for the construction site." Haydn enthusiastically agreed, so look out for it in the finished game! And that really sums up their enthusiastic use of improvisation.

It can't all come as easily as that though, so I asked where the guys got the idea for *Assassin*.

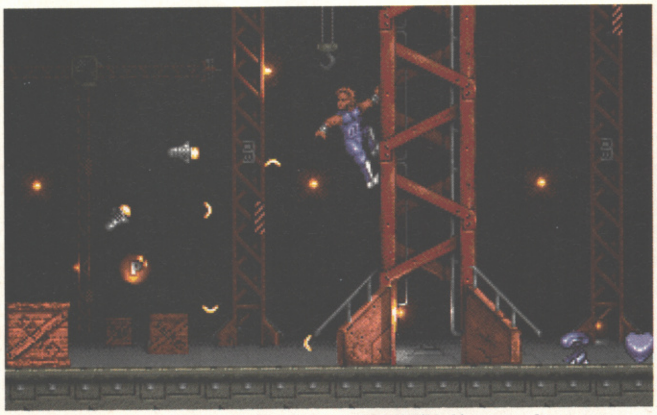
Dave: "We wanted an arcade-type adventure which would revolve around a guy who could fly and swing – a character who was really flexible. For instance, he can fire in all directions when he's swinging or climbing. That was the main aim, for me anyway – to create a character who could do just about anything we could think of. The graphics and style is all down to Haydn, though. He decides visually what's going to be in it."

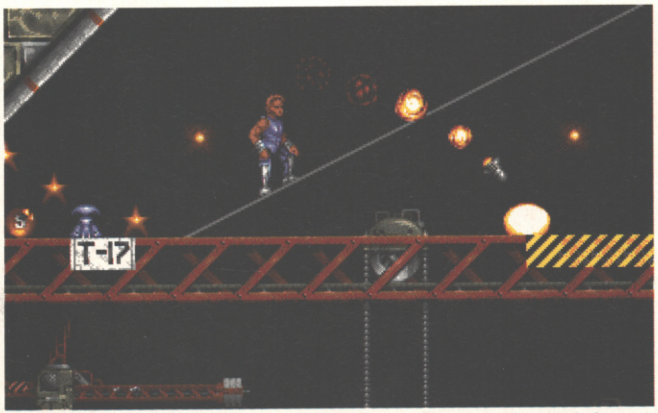
Haydn: "We meet half way if I like it and he doesn't, but usually I just sit down and draw something – like I did the second level in five days. The graphic style I've made very Mega Drive-ish, with the main character drawn very much in a console style too."

Verdict do far: This promises to be the best thing Team 17 have ever done – but then, so did *Project X* before it. We know Team 17 can come up with strong ideas, great visuals and a good, solid game hook – they've come out of nowhere to being one of the hottest development teams around, after all – but they do have a tendency to fall down in the game testing department.

If *Assassin* manages to be as sexy as *Project X*, but without the odd flaws and unfriendly difficulty curve that featured, it could be a massive hit. Indeed, even if it just manages to be sexy looking it'll probably still be a massive hit – we just won't like it so much. Here's hoping...

● *MATTHEW SQUIRES*

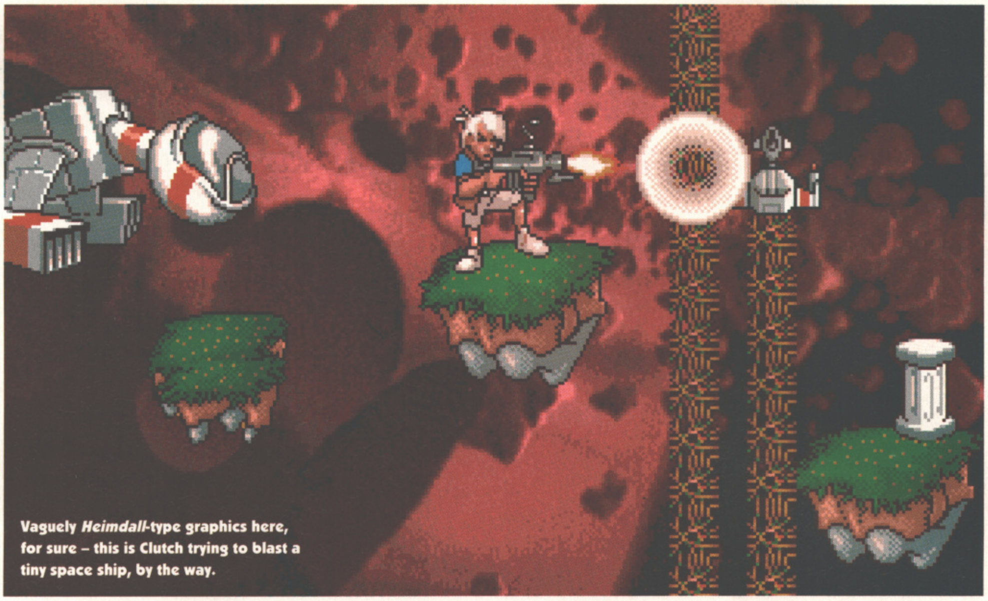

Looking rather like a scene from the beginning of *Wolfchild*, this screen shows our acrobatic hero using one of the sillier-looking of his 200 frames of animation.



Now this bit really (really) *is* like *Strider*, our hero making his way up an angled wire being very reminiscent of one of the most famous bits from Capcom's coin-op classic.

Game: Premiere
Publisher: Core Design
Authors: Dan Scott (code) and Jerr O'Carroll (graphics).
ETA: July

PREMIERE


Vaguely *Heimdall*-type graphics here, for sure – this is Clutch trying to blast a tiny space ship, by the way.

Briefly: Fans of Core's cartoon-like FRP game *Heimdall*, one of the biggest hits the Derby-based software house have enjoyed yet, will be on familar ground with *Premiere* – graphically at least. Though the two share the same graphic artist – one Jerr O'Carroll, an ex-animator, and arguably one of the most talented crayon wielders currently working in computer games – and thus are drawn in a very similar style, the game styles are quite different. *Heimdall* was a 3D isometric puzzle-based sort of game, whereas this is a much more action packed side-viewed platformer.

The two plots are very different too. The FRP and fantasy elements of *Heimdall* have gone here, with the action this time being relocated to a film studio. You play the hero, a young film editor called Clutch Cable, desperate to find a film which has been stolen from his cutting room floor on the eve of the movie's premiere. You've got a pretty good idea who did it too – the head of a rival film studio, who will have hidden the film canisters around his various film sets. Cue six levels, each with a different setting, as Clutch searches the locations of various different movies being shot in the rival studio – including a western, an old-style horror film, a sci-fi B-movie, a black-and-white Keystone Kops-type thing, and a few more.

Being a more action orientated game, our hero can do a lot more than the lead character in *Heimdall* ever could – it's not just walking around throwing switches here. Instead Clutch can walk, jump, kick, pick up things, use suitable weapons (custard pies in the black-and-white bit, sticks of dynamite in the Western level), throw switches to deactivate assorted traps (okay, so some of that stuff *is* in here), and pick up extra energy from pizzas, hot dogs and (if the programmers have thought of this, and I hope they have) buckets of popcorn.

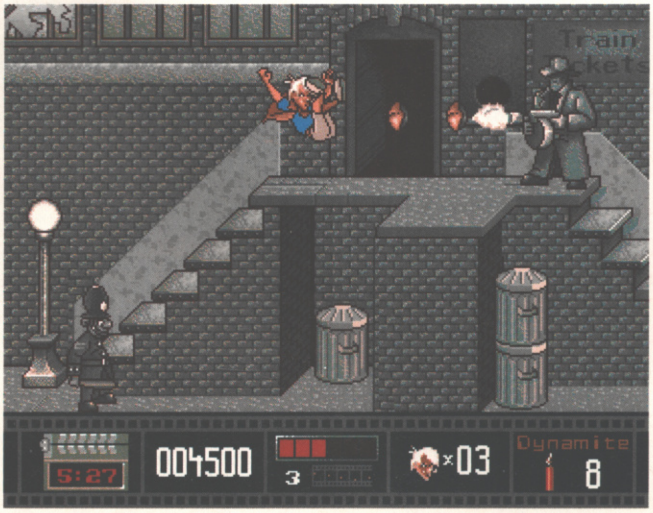
"Premiere looks gorgeous, there's no doubt about it"

Rounding the project off are some neat bits of intro animation, as you might expect from someone with Jerr's background, with the odd bit incorporated into the game too, such as animations showing what happens when our hero falls into a trap. There's even a whole level set in a cartoon film, a la Roger Rabbit, with the already-quite-cartoony Clutch up against much more broadly drawn cartoon baddies.

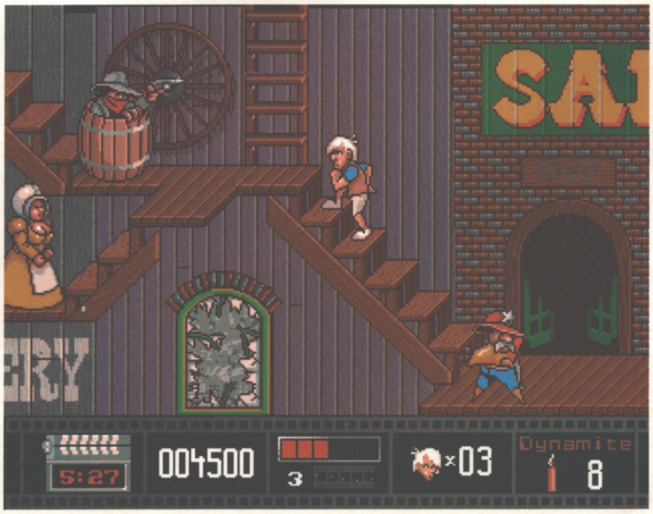
The creators speak: Working alongside Jerr O'Carroll is programmer Dan Scott, new to Core, though he did turn his hand to the *Wolfchild* intro sequence a few months ago. The idea behind this game isn't to in any way create a *Heimdall 2*, say Core – that will probably come later, though when isn't clear – but simply to apply a similar slick visual style to a platform arcade adventure game.

Verdict so far: Just take a look at the screens – *Premiere* looks gorgeous, there's no doubt about it. However, at the time of writing it was still at quite an early stage – things are going to have to really start moving if the game's to make its proposed July release date. Keep your eyes peeled for more details in the next issue of AMIGA POWER.

● ***MATT BIELBY***



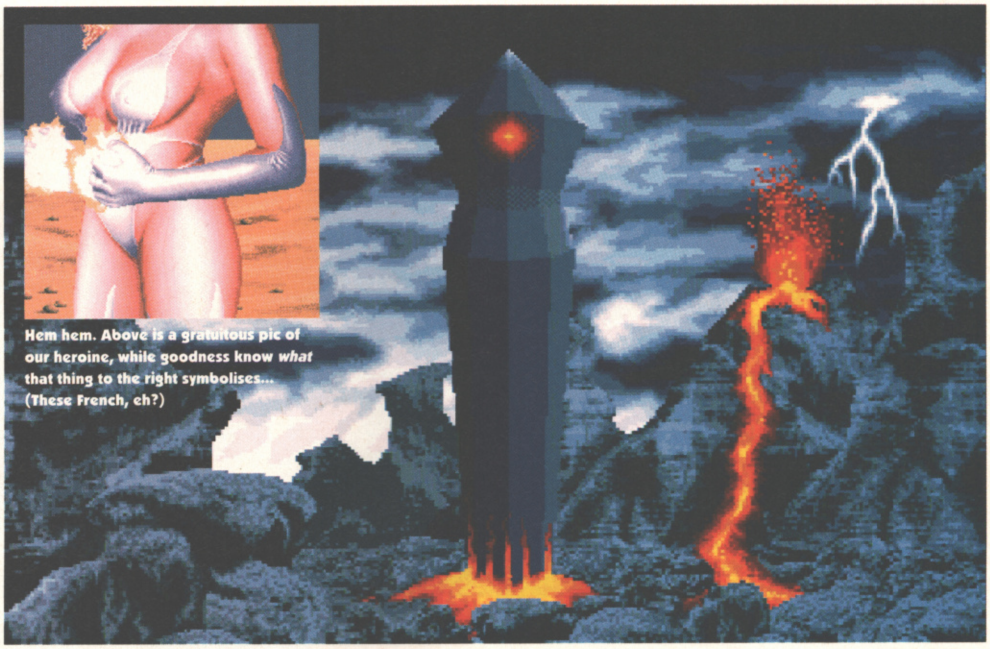
Gangster action from the black-and-white film level – here Clutch seems to be trying an interesting method for dodging bullets. (Or maybe he's just been shot.)



Yee ha! It's ye olde Wild West level, with Clutch desperately trying to avoid being shot by the guy in the barrel above him. (Maybe the worry is what's made his hair go all white...)

ENTITY

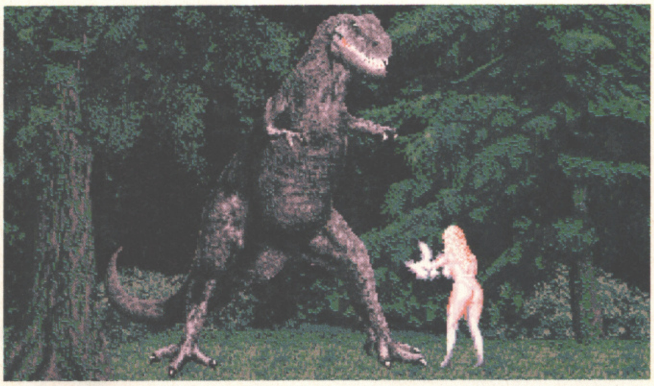
Game: Entity
Publisher: Loriciel
Author: Noel Billy
ETA: November



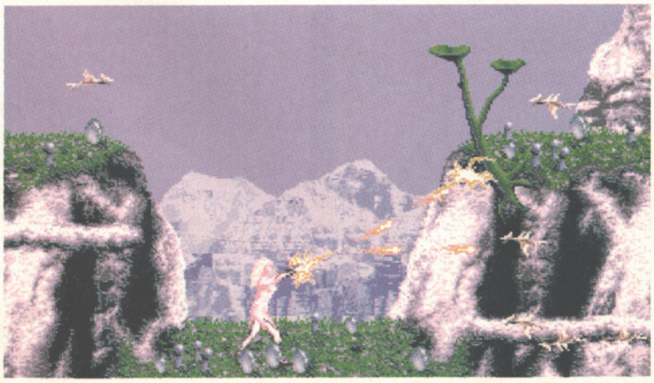
Hem hem. Above is a gratuitous pic of our heroine, while goodness know *what* that thing to the right symbolises... (These French, eh?)

Briefly: Yep, it's the old 'Earth is in imminent danger, so average girl is given super-human powers and must save the planet and defeat the bad guy' story once again, this time presented as a mixture of cinematic and action sequences not unlike Delphine's excellent *Another World*. The first obvious difference, however, is that the animated sequences in *Entity* blow anything we've yet seen out of the water. Don't get too over excited though – they only form the intro and framing sequences, the bulk of the game being more standard side-on viewed running and jumping stuff, albeit with nifty graphics, and shockingly detailed end-of-level creatures. It's a shame that the movie-style clips don't form a more essential part of the gameplay, but with graphics this stunning it would be pretty much impossible to make them interactive on a standard Amiga.

Split into five distinct levels (100 screens in total) – the stone age, a forest, some mountains, a network of caves, and finally the apocalypse level – you guide our heroine around a series of scrolling landscapes, collecting power-ups (including a flight spell) and fighting to the death with end-of-level baddies. These guys range from a Tyrannasaurus Rex (pictured) to the Entity himself, while each level also features an assortment of gross-out creatures, including such wonderfully named nasties as the Pfourt (a spore-spitting plant – honest), the Flyopthere and the Vilbros. Other details are still to be sorted at the moment, though it's likely that on top of all this fighting and exploring malarkey, various traps and puzzles will be included.



It's One Million Years BC all over again! Our well built heroine comes up against an ever better built Tyrannosaur in a scene straight out of Ray Harryhausen.



While in this bizarre (but undeniably pretty) shot, she (sorry – it's not the cat's mother, she doesn't actually have a name yet) zaps a tree. No doubt all will be explained (etc).

The creators speak: Putting puzzles and other details into the game is still some into the future – at the moment designer Noel Billy has his work cut out getting the suitably spectacular graphics up and running. Having worked on his own on the project for a year, he's only now recruited another programmer to help out with the main game engine. It's an ambitious project – and amazing to think that it's actually the first game Noel's ever worked on!

"Inspiration for the characters, monsters, decor and so on was drawn from my imagination and dreams," he told us, "though heroic fantasy illustrations from artists such as Boris Valejo and Rowena Morril were also an influence."

> **"Inspiration was drawn from my imagination and dreams"**

How do you think it compares to *Another World*?

"Graphically, *Entity* will be very different from *Another World*. While *Another World*'s graphics were based on 3D vectors, the graphics of *Entity* are hand drawn and digitised.

"In play, *Entity* will feel a lot more like an arcade kind of game, although it will have adventure game features, as in *Another World*."

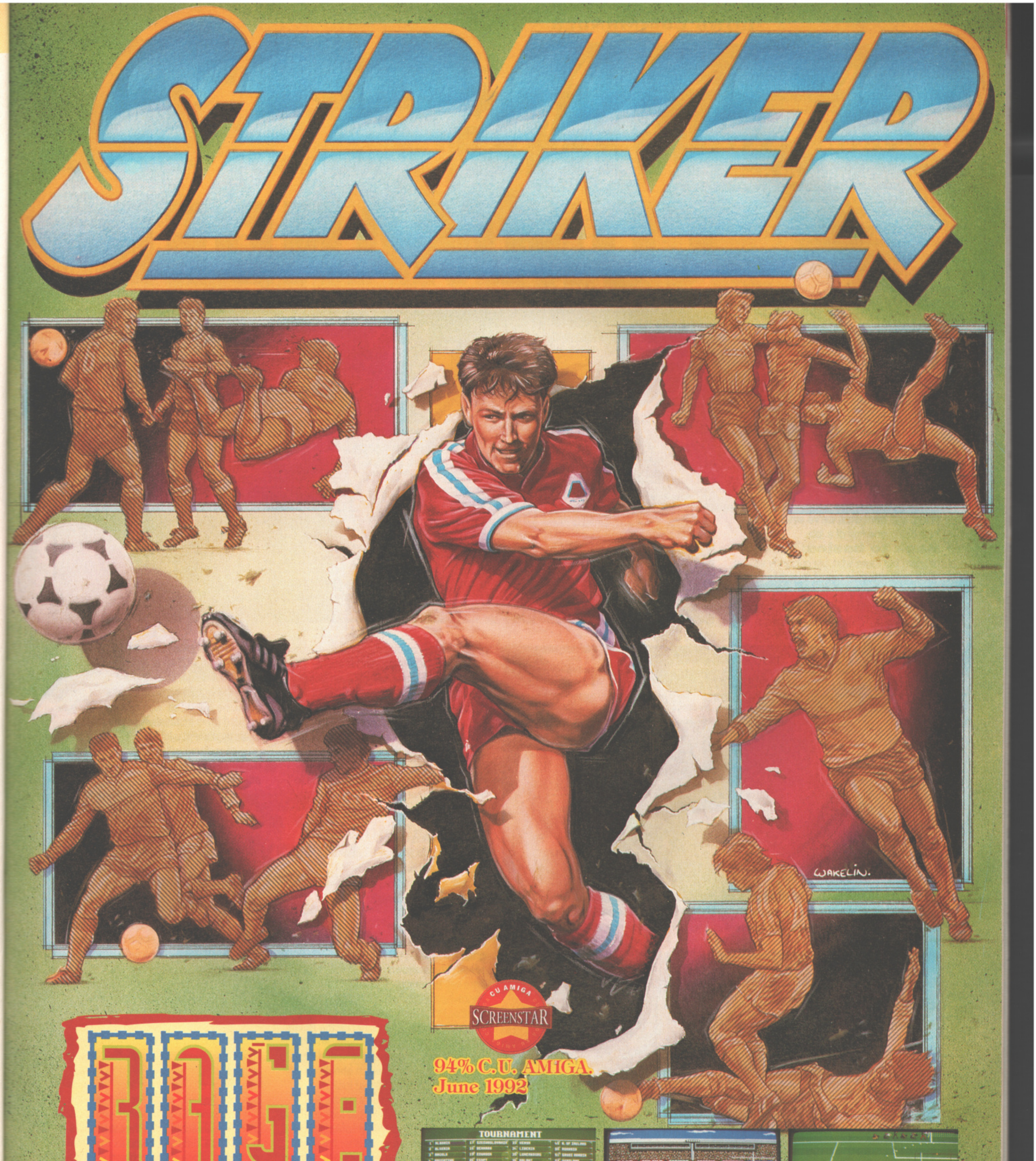
But just how much of a part will the impressive cinematic effects play in the finished game?

"There will be five to six minutes-worth of cinematic stuff, used as an introduction and between the playable levels. These sequences will give things continuity, and show the player what to do next. However, they don't form the bulk of the game."

Verdict so far: Schwing! That was the initial response in the AMIGA POWER offices to early demos of *Entity* – there's no getting around the fact that the first things that hit you about this game are the rather (ahem) generous proportions of the central character. Okay, so she's slightly unfeasible, but this is a fantasy game we're talking about, after all.

However, at this stage judging the game, not just the character, is rather more difficult. Although the cinematic sequences, graphics and basic game concept are at an advanced stage, the coding of the actual interactive parts of the game is only just underway. More news as we get it, of course, but in the meantime we think it's fair to say that *Entity* looks likely to be Loriciel's biggest hit yet.

● ***MARK RAMSHAW***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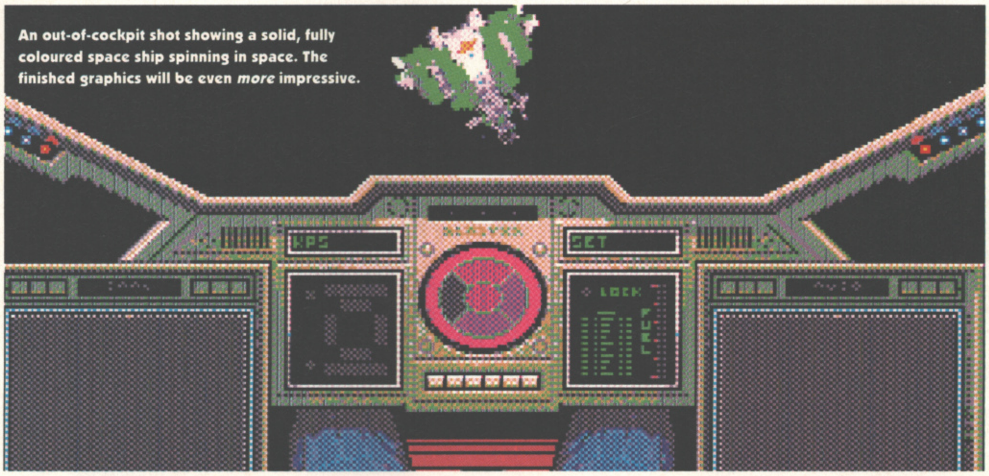
Game: Wing Commander
Publisher: Origin (Mindscape)
Authors: Nik Pelling, Justin Garvanovich
ETA: September

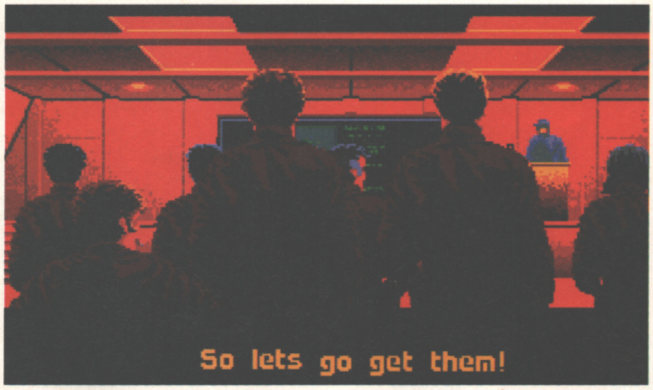
WING COMMANDER

Briefly: Shock news of the month has to be that *Wing Commander* is back on course for release. Yes, the game that re-defined the PC games market is finally going to get the Amiga treatment. Our version will not only feature all the between-mission plot screens and briefing sequences, but the full texture-mapped 3D graphics system used in the main game too! Currently running at 10-12 frames per second – about the same speed as the original did on a low end PC (ie fast enough for a playable game, and with just as much detail as the PC version) – Origin promise that the graphics system will be some 30 percent faster in the finished game. Support for the minority of Amiga owners with accelerator boards is also promised.

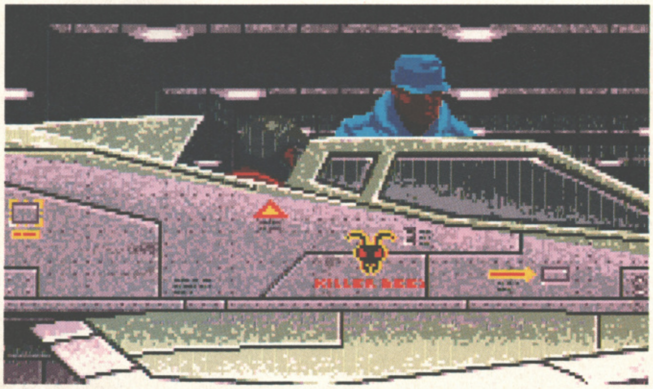
Coding duties are being handled by old hand Nik Pelling (aka Orlando, the man responsible for ancient classics like *Frak*), and from what we've seen so far, he's doing one hell of a job.


An out-of-cockpit shot showing a solid, fully coloured space ship spinning in space. The finished graphics will be even *more* impressive.

Back to basics: For the 10 readers out there who are currently saying "*Wing* what? Never heard of it", this is the sort of giant space adventure *Epic* can only dream of being. The game combines an evolving storyline with a number of deep space missions for the player – these range from escorting friendly transporters to hyperspace jump points, to undertaking reconnaisance missions, to launching search and destroy operations.



Each mission is introduced by a Star Wars-style briefing sequence. Here, the flight path, objective, any known enemies and asteroid storms are described to you.



The briefing over with, it's time to climb into the cockpit, and get into the 3D part. If your craft is in such a good state at the end of a mission, you probably deserve a medal!

The action is shown in an out-of-cockpit view, as the player (with the aid of a wingman) slowly rids the universe of the evil Kilrathi warriors, rising through the ranks (and getting better space ships to fly) in the process. In short, *Wing Commander* combines good old fashioned blasting with extraordinary visuals.

Verdict so far: Origin/Mindscape are keen to stress that the graphics in the screen shots shown here will be vastly improved for the finished game. The original PC visuals have been ported directly onto the Amiga, hence the rough and grainy look at the moment. An artist is currently touching up all the space ships and other 3D object, which should ensure are cleaner, more polished look.

One criticism levelled at the PC version of the game was the lack of actual depth behind the clever graphics routines. The Amiga version won't alter this any, and to be honest we don't think they have to either. Here at AMIGA POWER we reckon the original played like a mutha anyway, deep or not.

One distinct advantage the Amiga game should have over the PC version is in the disk requirements. The original came on rather a lot of disks and required a sizeable chunk of hard drive space, while the Amiga game is expected to only consume two disks, with options available for hard drive installation or the use of an external drive. It's looking likely that one meg of memory will be needed, but what did you expect – this is *Wing Commander*, after all.

What else is there to say? Well, like we said, the screen shots you see here may looked damned impressive, but they aren't as good as you'll get in the finished game. And of course, there's no chance of anybody completing all the missions in a few hours (as with some 'epic' 3D space games we could mention – eh, Ocean?).

> **"No chance of anybody completing all the missions in a few hours"**

For those readers who don't know what the fuss is about texture mapping, and think filled polygons are fine, thank you very much – we really can't stress how much difference it makes. Imagine the visual quality of sprites, but with the flexibility and 3D appeal of polygons. With *Wing Commander*'s routines the player is given huge, detailed, complex (and multi-coloured) space-ships to blast. And there's even a plot in there. This is space combat the way it should look. Let's just hope they can get the whole thing together and bring the 3D routines up to speed...

● ***MARK RAMSHAW***

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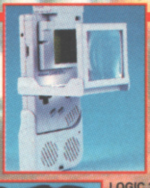

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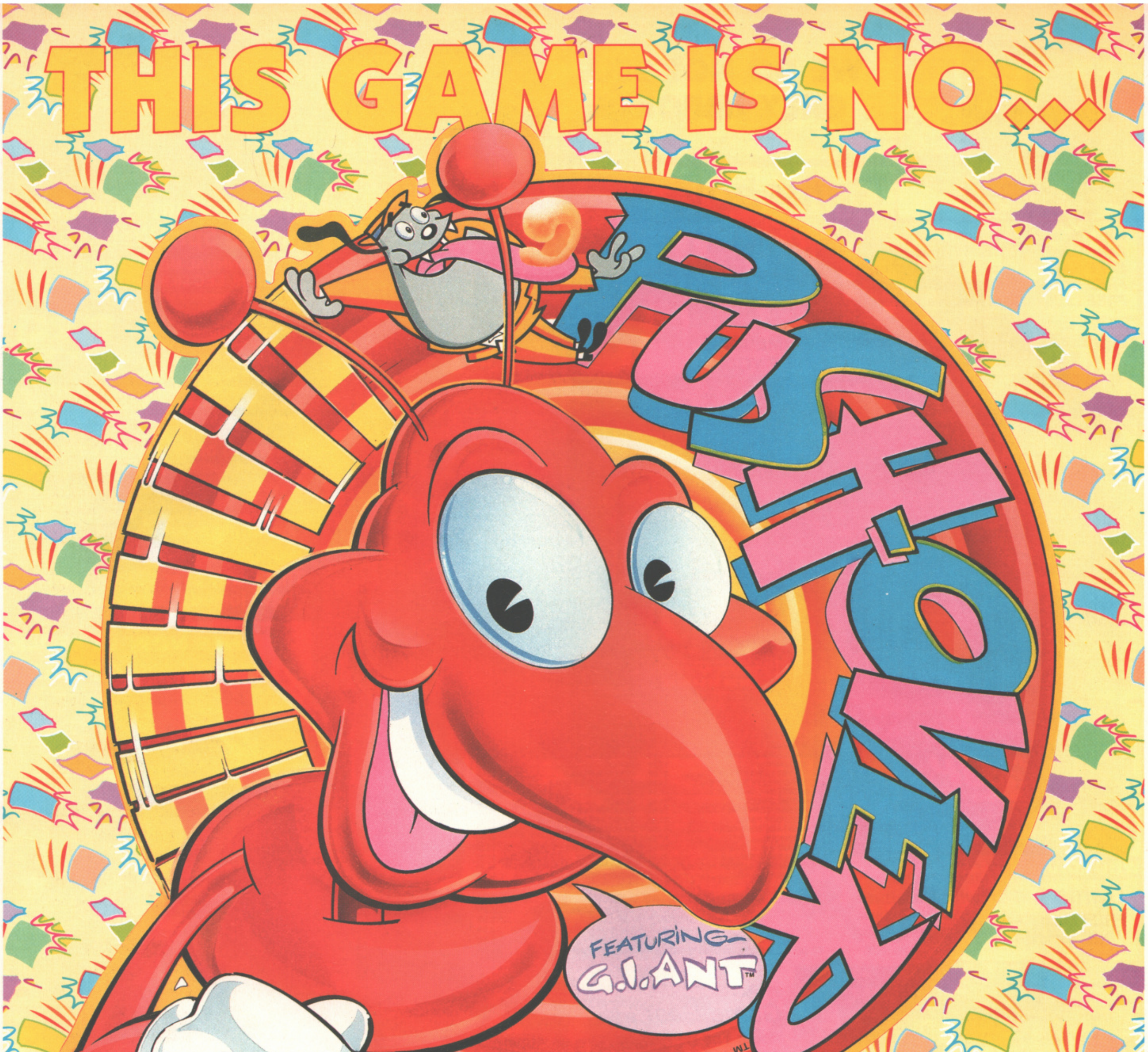

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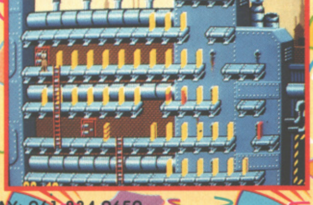

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JUST WHO DO WE THINK WE ARE?

MATT BIELBY

Cars have been the name of the game for Matt this month. His five year mission to actually buy a set of wheels ended in tears once again, when he discovered that Ford no longer produced the Capri with the fluffy dice and go-faster stripes as standard.

Matt's catchphrases of the month: 'Erm...', 'spooky', and 'Get out of the pool!'

MARK RAMSHAW

Continuing his soul-searching foray into American culture, Mark has been carefully studying Wayne's World. The result is that the office now has to put up with him shouting 'not!' and 'schwing!' along with the usual round of 'excellent' and 'dude'. Oh dear...

Mark's catchphrases of the month: 'That was a jolly good computer game – Not!'

STUART CAMPBELL

Spare a thought for poor Stuart this month. While the rest of the team were grooving on down at the local beach, poor Stuart was stuck in the office giving *Sensible Soccer* a thorough going over. Then again, he just wouldn't be the same Stuart with a suntan...

Stuart's catchphrases of the month: 'Gooaaaal!', 'And he heads it in the net', etc, etc, etc.

GARY PENN

Gary's been combining reviewing with his passion for musicals this month. "The Pirates Of Penzance and *Monkey Island 2*, what a gorgeous, dreamy combination," gushed our Gaz. Next month he hopes to combine the pleasures of Me And My Girl with *(Snip – Ed.)*

Gary's catchphrase of the month: 'How much wood could a woodchuck chuck...' etc.

AMANDA COOK

Amanda's desperate to book a holiday in the Dominican Republic – for her wedding. Sorry, readers, but the old crayon wielder is tying the knot this summer (with Amiga Format's crayon-maestro, no less). Well, at least it should put an end to Amanda's fan mail...

Amanda's catchphrase of the month: 'No honestly, I'm not joking.'

SALLY MEDDINGS

This month it's been the turn of Sally to jet off to foreign climes. So while we slaved away in the dark dingy AP offices, Sal was soaking up that Mediterranean sun in Majorca. Of course we're not bitter or anything. Not even slightly. No really. We don't like holidays anyway.

Sally's catchphrase of the month: 'So, do you like my lovely suntan?'

NEIL WEST

Neil wants us to send out a message to one of our readers this month. So if you're reading this Carrie Otis, Neil would love you to pop round some time for a nice hot cup of tea and a sticky bun. (Honestly, we don't know why he can't use the phone like everyone else...)

Neil's catchphrase of the month: 'If she was president she'd be Baberaham Lincoln.'

JONATHAN DAVIES

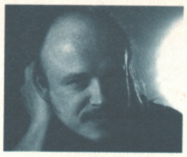
Jonathan fell foul of the Curse Of The Amiga this month. Hey – a broken power supply is no joke when you've got seven thousand tips, hints and cheats to try out. After that ordeal, we just didn't have the heart to make him play another wargame. We're not *that* evil.

Jonathan's catchphrase of the month: 'Another naval wargame – hurrah!'

MATTHEW SQUIRES

We sent Matthew up to visit Team 17 this month, and, um, we haven't seen him since. Some incriminating photos were posted to the office, but Mr Squires himself is nowhere to be seen. So, if anyone in Yorkshire spots a rugby-playing type lying outside a pub somewhere, please give us a call.

Matthew's catchphrase of the month: 'Bleugh!'



KARL FOSTER

In a desperate attempt to prevent Karl from playing *Legend* all the time, we decided to give him a nice, zappy shoot-'em-up to review. Unfortunately, the packages got mixed up, and he got landed with *Epic* instead. Three hours later he was back playing *Legend* again.

Karl's catchphrase of the month: 'I finished *Epic* in three hours!'

DAVE GOLDER

Ever since reviewing *Dune* for us, Francesca Annis has been playing a major part in Dave's daydreams (see p44). It seems Mark's undying love of the 'top' actress has rubbed off on him, and now Dave suffers from constant urges to watch tacky old fantasy movie Krull, erm, constantly. What a strange boy he is...

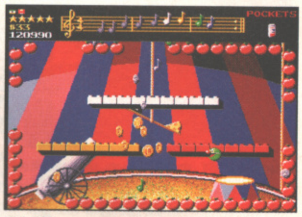
Dave's catchphrase of the month: 'Sigh...'

RICH PELLEY

With one hand tied behind his back (so that's what he does with the silk-lined handcuffs) and a clutch of A-level exams to finish off, John Travolta-esque night groover Rich still found time to do some reviewing for us this month. What a dude, and what a *nice* moustache...!

Rich's catchphrase of the month: 'Get that stupid moustache off my picture right now!'

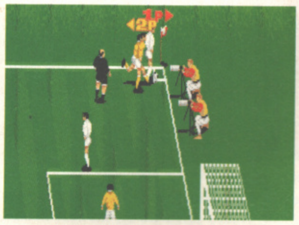
GAMES



Wizkid – spaced out and seriously hot.

It's here! It's here! *Monkey Island 2* is finally here. Find out just how Gary Penn got on with our old friend Guybrush Threepwood on page 38. But don't go away – there're plenty more reviews this month, in a special bumper-sized reviews section. We've got Mark totally losing his marbles over the utterly hatstand *Wizkid*, Stuart complaining about dodgy refs and wet pitches in *Sensible Soccer*, and we've got the definitive reviews of such long-awaited titles as *Jaguar*, *Dune*, *Myth*, *Hook*, and – yes! – *Epic*. It's all here...

But before you going skipping joyfully into our big reviews, spare a thought for the smaller, but equally fab, little ones further on down the line (page 78, to be exact). Here we've got the best (and the worst) of the rest, with such memorable titles as *Ugh!*, *Discovery*, and Domark's *Euro Football Champ*. And – hey! – we haven't even mentioned the budget games yet!



Euro Footy – will the crowd go wild?

THE AMIGA POWER SCORING SYSTEM (AND HOW IT WORKS): AN EASY-TO-USE BEGINNERS GUIDE

The AMIGA POWER reviewing philosophy is an absolute doddle to understand. No, really, it's simple. But if you're reading this at all you must want to know at least a little bit more, so here, in all its glory, is The Way We Do Things At AMIGA POWER....

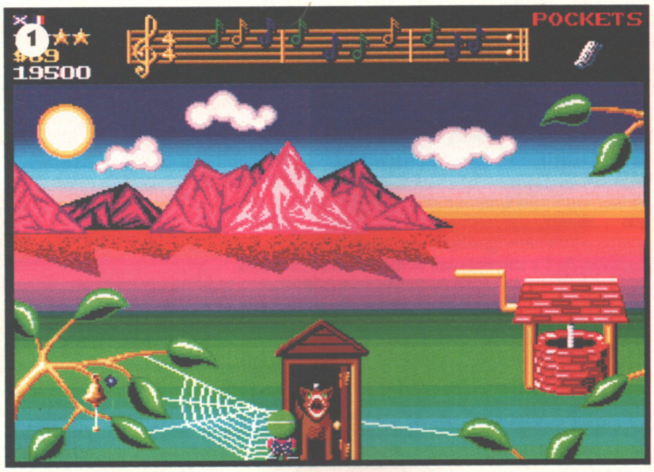
1) We're all aware of how much software costs, which is why we believe a game has to be *really* good to be worth buying – *or* worth giving a good mark. Happily, there's more than enough top-notch stuff around if you only look – we mark as hard as we do to prevent you from wasting time (or money!) on the bad ones. You'll thank us for it in the end...

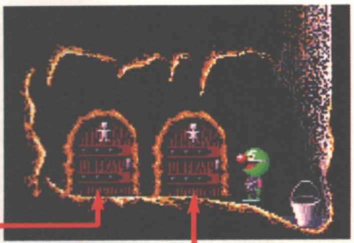
2) We believe rating systems should be simple and easy to understand. That's why we just give one mark out of 100, a few summing up sentences, and that's it. What more is there?

3) This month we're actually going to have a third point – Not!

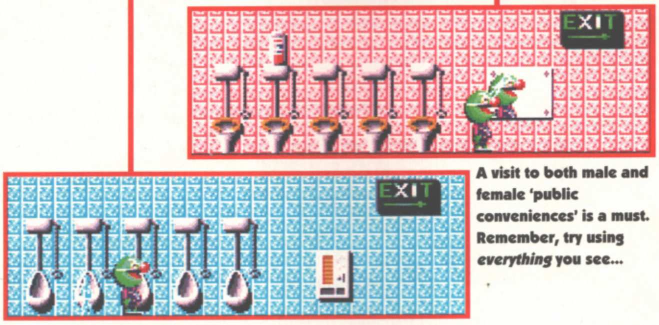
WIZKID

It's official – Sensible's latest is deeply dippy enough to turn even the most professional of game reviewers into a space cadet. Imagine, then, what it could do to Mark Ramshaw...





Wizkid begins the game, and his quest, on Sunset Wizovard. Notable areas of interest are the well (try mucking about with this) and the tree-mounted bell. Above we see Wizkid unable to get past a vicious guard dog, while to the right and below he explores the seedier side of life under ground....



A visit to both male and female 'public conveniences' is a must. Remember, try using *everything* you see...

LET'S GET WIZZY

Before Wizkid can rescue his folks from Zark's castle, he has to fight and explore his way around the Wiz world. While it *is* possible to complete each individual round in arcade mode, vital objects (needed for completing the game proper) can only be found when fully exploring each area.

So, let's go for a brief tour of the islands, taking snapshot views of Wizkid's adventures along the way. Obviously, we don't want to give too much away here, so we've decided not to show you some of the more unusual and bizarre screens.

By the way, the numbers on the map show where you'll find the various screens on this page. Now let's go...

Game: Wizkid: The Story Of Wizball II
Publisher: Ocean
Price: £25.99
Authors: Sensible Software
Release: July

Hello, good evening, and welcome. Today, we'll be charting the progress of young Wizkid, as he undertakes perhaps the biggest challenge of his life. Mark Ramshaw, our man on the spot takes up the story:

Mark Ramshaw: ...and then he said, "A round of applause for the donkey". Hahaha... Er, what? Oh, we're on air. (Sorry.)

(Ahem). Hello, this is Mark Ramshaw at Wizworld Boot Camp – current abode of Wizkid, son of famous guy-on-the-rebound and international playboy, Mr Wiz Ball. With me here is drill sergeant BD Snail. Can you tell me Mr Snail, just why has Wizkid enrolled in Boot Camp? Isn't he still a little too young?

BD Snail: To train himself for a special mission, sir! Yes, he is younger than our normal recruits, sir! But he's got a lot of ability for his age, sir!

Mark: And can you tell me about this special mission?

BD Snail: I think you better ask young Wiz about that, sir! Classified information and all that, sir! Ah, here comes the young recruit now, sir!

Mark: Ah, Wiz, hello. I'm Mark Ramshaw from AMIGA POWER. Can you tell me about your special mission? (That's right son, just talk straight into the microphone.)

Wizkid: My parents – that's Wizball and the wizard of course *(! – Ed.)* – have been kidnapped (whimper). It was the nasty mouse Zark that did it. He's really bogus, and I'm going to make myself big, clever and strong (just like my dad), and go smash his face in.

Mark: And can you tell our readers just what your Boot Camp training involves?

Wizkid: Well, I'm learning to smash these bricks, which is really fab. And when baddies are near, I can knock the bricks onto their dumb heads (tee-hee). And if I get my special red nose I can bounce the bricks on my head, so I can use the same ones again and again. Or even better, I can get some teeth (giggle) and then catch and carry the bricks. Thunderchoppers (that's what we call them) are really skill, 'cos then I can really aim the bricks at the bad guys, y'know?

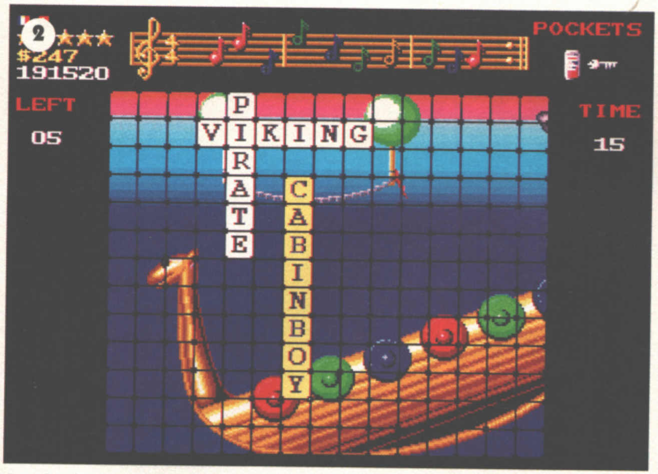
"An Amiga based mind-altering substance"

SOME TIME LATER...

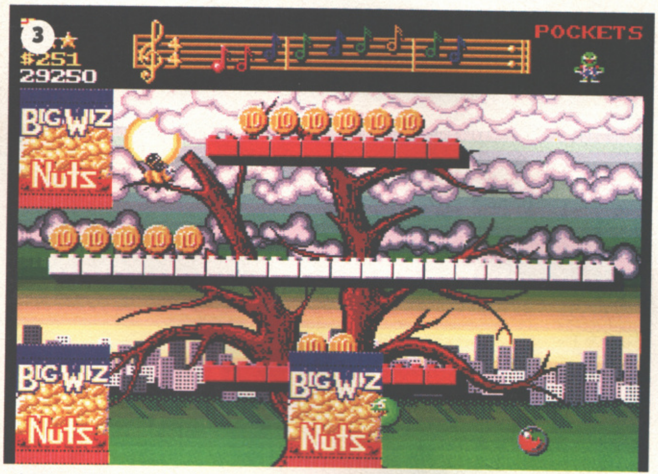
Mark: Right Wiz, here you are on Sunset Wizovard. What's your plan?

Wiz: It's a really sound plan, that's what it is. Y'see, there are like nine areas which I've got to fight through, using all my really ace moves 'n' stuff. So I reckon if I beat them bad guys and collect the note bubbles which they drop (nah, I don't know why they do that either), then I can make a tune and collect some extra pocket money.

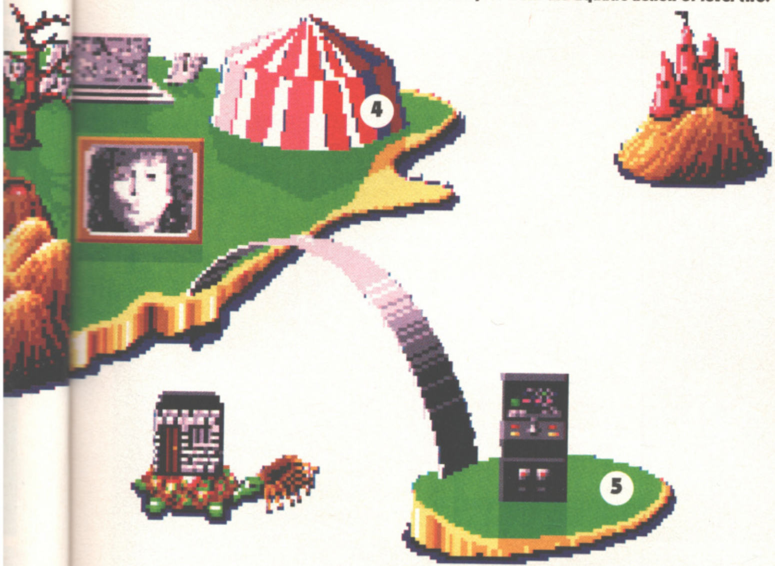
Mark: Pocket money?

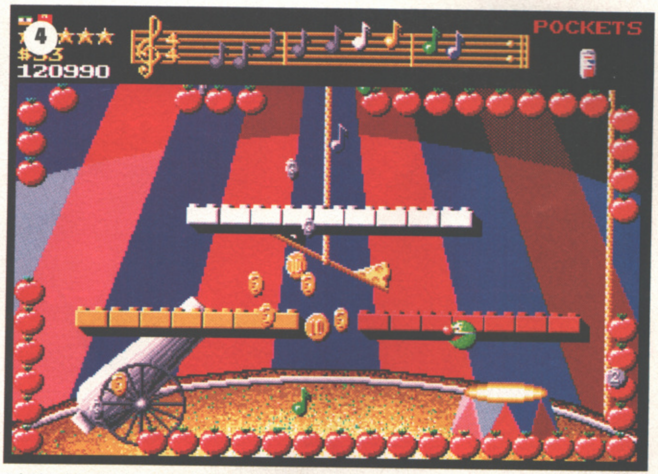


A cash-prize crossword puzzle offers a brief respite from the aquatic action of level two.

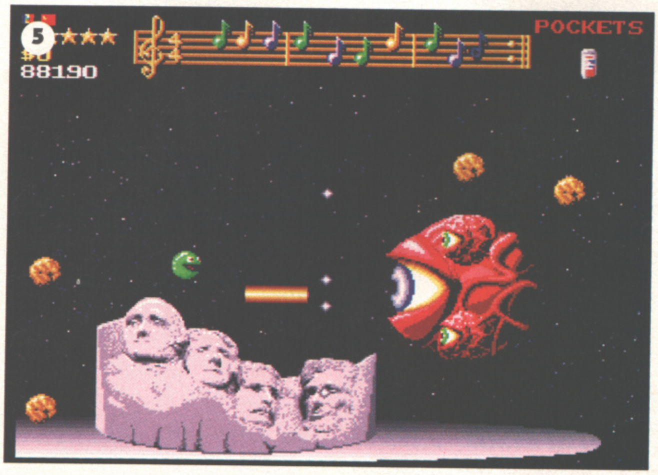


Wiz gets hits teeth into a sizeable pack of nuts. To perform this special trick, Wizkid first has to collect a pair of 'Thunderchoppers', which allow him to carry objects around. Once a series of arcade screens have been cleared, Wiz can then set about exploring the place, and collecting vital objects. I wonder what's inside that big old tree, for instance.





Wizkid visits the circus on his travels with bizarre results. Here we see Wiz with fetching red nose (which gives him the ability to bounce things on his head) just as he completes a screen. Time for a quick rush for all the coins before moving onto the next screen.



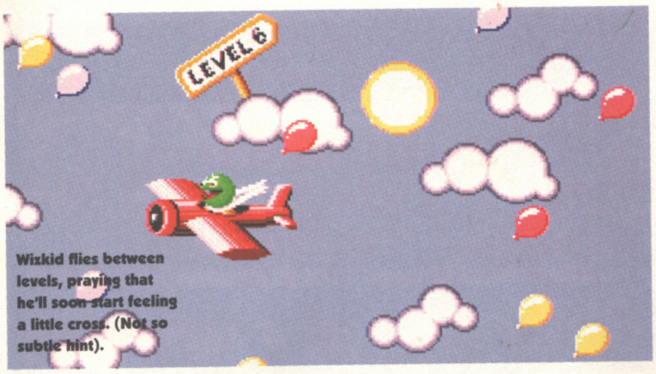
Now here's a blast from the past! Wizkid finds himself playing a shoot-'em-up – complete with power-ups and yucky end-of-level guardians. Note the presidents at the back, by the way – just like in the original *Wizball*. Nice to see a game with a sense of history.

Wiz: Yeah, then I can buy some fab gear to go exploring, and find the cats (they're pals of Nifta, who's a really fab'n'ace friend of mine).
Mark: Cats?
Wiz: Don't you oldies know anything? There's a cat in each area, and so if I can find all those, then they can help me when I need to cross the sea to get to Zark's castle – that's where he's got my father locked away (sob). Them cats row like nobody's business, y'know what I mean?
Mark: Er, quite.
Wiz: Now, a Wizkid's got to do what a Wizkid's got to do. Wish me luck, mister.

INTO THE WIZWORLD

Mark: And off he goes, as the sun dips down over the mountainous horizon on Sunset Wizovard – ducking, diving, weaving and performing headers even old Joe Jordan would be proud of. For such a young player, our Wiz is a remarkably skillful little mover. He's not half as green as you'd expect. (Except he is, if you see what I mean.) Watch as he roundly whips those evil (?) butterflies with those huge yin-yang (??) symbols. What a pro. And in no time at all, he's collected enough cash to pop to the shop and buy himself a cute little pair of legs and a newspaper. So, what now Wiz?
Wiz: Well... (snigger).
Mark: Well what?
Wiz: No, I'm mean I'm going to go down the well. It'll be well sound, just you wait and see. I'll winch the bucket up like so, and climb in, then down I go. Catch you later, dude.
Mark: Good luck, Wiz. And there he goes. I'll wager there're male and female toilets down there (don't ask me why, it's just a vibe thing). Now, if he can somehow clear the blockage in the volcanoes, and collect any objects lying around, I think he'll be ready to move on.

While he does that, though, let's take time out here to marvel at the beauty of this place. It may be menacing, but it sure looks nice. And the acoustics are just perfect for that rousing music we can hear wafting across the Wizovard. And what's this? Here's Wiz clambering out of the well, even as we speak. In his hands we can definitely see a can of coke, which I'm sure will come in handy at some point, and it looks like he's heading over →

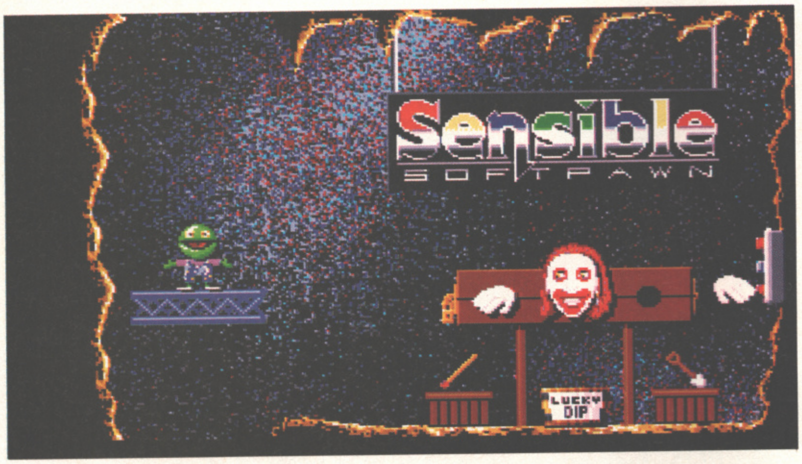


Wizkid flies between levels, praying that he'll soon start feeling a little cross. (Not so subtle hint).

to ring that bell. What next, Wiz?
Wiz: I'm going to go for the bell, like so.
Mark: Lookoooout!
Wiz: Wow! Who would have expected a toilet shed to drop from the skies? Like (giggle) banging, man!
Mark: Hey Wiz, why not open that shed door?
Wiz: I know, why don't I open that shed door?
Mark: Sigh.
Wiz: (Knock knock). Nobody's answering. I'll just (snigger) open the door and take a peek inside. Eek! It's a ravenous dog! (Slams door.)
Mark: Try the newspaper, Wiz. You never know.
Wiz: Yeah, fab idea. If I put the newspaper through this letter box, and try opening the door again. Yuck! The dog is on the toilet, AND he's reading the newspaper. Gross. Still, it might mean I'll be able to sneak past the ravenous beastie now. Let's try again, shall we?
Mark: And there he goes, where he'll appear nobody knows. I'm off to the next island in Wizland. Join me, and Wizkid (if he makes it) after the news...

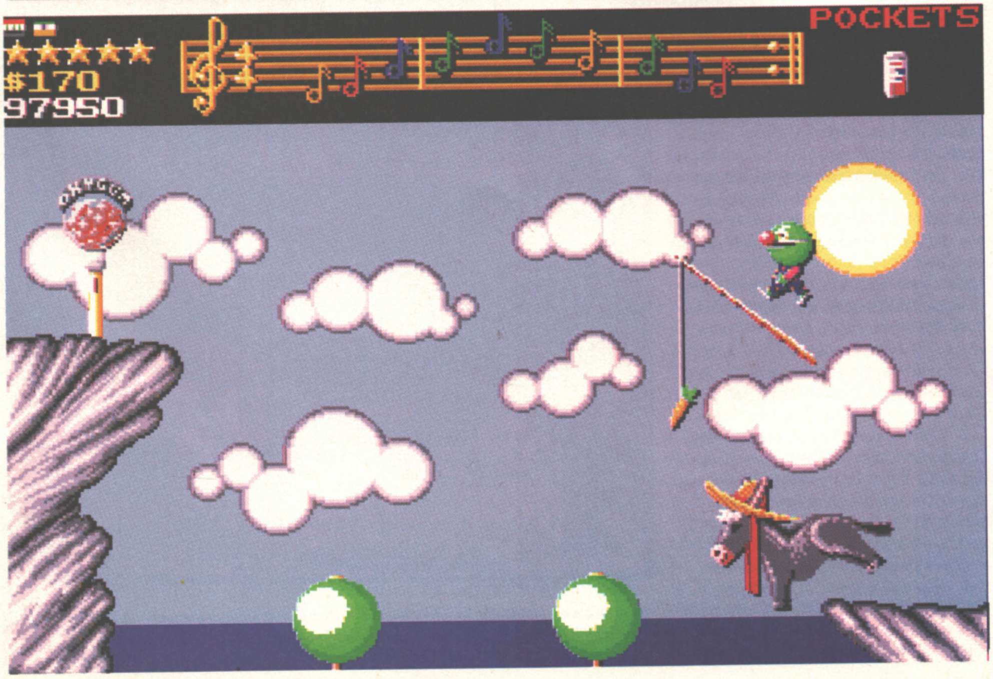
AFTER THE NEWS...

Mark: So here we are at the Jail House Wiz island. Tell me, Wizkid, just how tough has it been so far?
Wiz: It's been well 'ard, mister. I've been underwater, in volcanoes. I've been flying. I've been killed and re-incarnated. I've even been in space, fighting waves of nasties. I had a laser gun an' everything – it was wicked, y'know? And I learned so much. Like, it really pays to save up and buy everything possible, 'cos you never know when you'll need it. I've found that unless you wipe out all the baddies and collect the money, it takes ages to make any progress. And it pays to explore, y'know what I mean?
Mark: Quite. So what next? The battle isn't over – you still face terrible odds.
Wiz: I know, mister. But I've been getting all the cats, so when I get the boat over to Zark's island, they can help me row. Somehow I think I'll need their help, 'cos sometimes (sniff) I think I'll never rescue my parents.
Mark: I see. Well Wiz, it just remains for me to wish you good luck. I think we've taken enough photos for our feature. Thanks for letting us follow you on your daring mission. Take care now.
Wiz: Just one more thing, mister.
Mark: What's that?
Wiz: This is for a photo feature in the next issue of AMIGA POWER, yeah?
Wiz: Can you send me a copy? It's my favourite.
(One more review like that, Ramshaw, and either I go or you go. – Ed.)
● ***MARK RAMSHAW***



Left: In the bowels of one of the levels we find this tasteful little screen. This here clown likes a bit of wheeling and dealing, and the odd lucky dip. It's his thirst for new objects which really matters though...

Below: Here we see Wizkid and his donkey (don't ask) parting company as he leaves the Wizovard. There's treasure to be found in the sea, but Wiz can't breathe underwater. Or can he...?



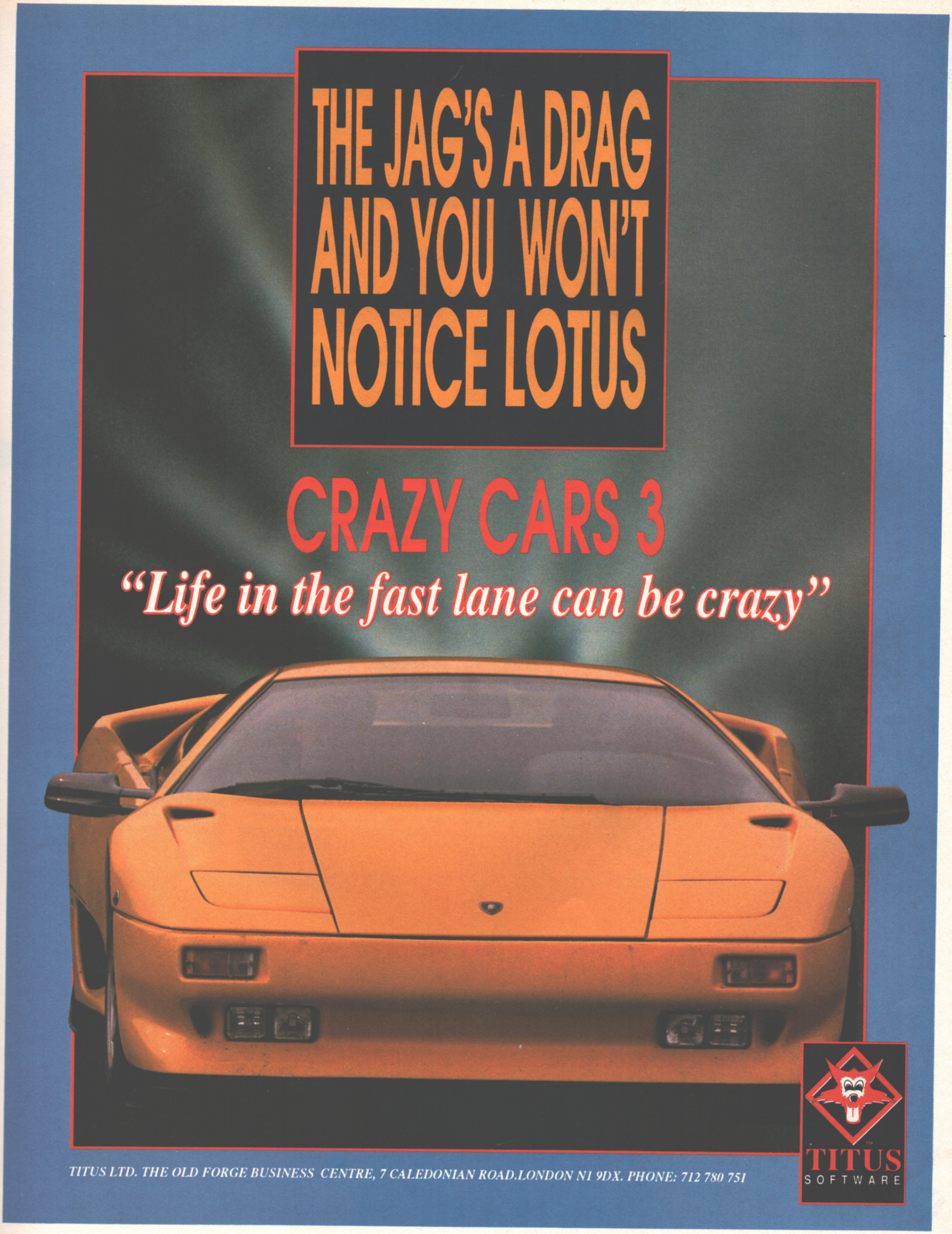
UPPERS *Wizkid*'s real genius lies in how all sorts of game styles are blended seamlessly into one another to make a crazy, yet cohesive, whole, where you never know what's going to happen next. It's got a wonderfully thought out learning curve too – one of the best we've ever seen, with an excellent training section at the beginning. Technically spot on, with wild graphics, excellent and varied sound, and an evil sense of humour, *Wizkid* really is as close as we're going to get to the the first Amiga-based mind-altering substance.

DOWNERS Working out where the smallish *Wizkid* is on the screen (particularly at the start) is sometimes a bit tough. Our only real gripe, though, is that it's possible to play right through the levels, only to be told that not enough kittens were collected to progress to the last section. It's 'Game Over' at this point and you have to start again – how very annoying.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Playing *Wizkid* can result in a scrambling of your brain nodes. I'm currently trying on straitjackets and weaving baskets *(And utterly incapable of writing a comprehensible review – Ed)*, so deeply has its bizarre, surreal sense of humour affected me. *Wizkid* is a psychedelic mix of arcade adventure, football, bad jokes, and arcade games like *Breakout* and *Pengo* – but with a perfect control system. The most refreshing thing in years, and so individual it's as much fun to play as it obviously was to write. If you don't buy *Wizkid*, your life really will be a lot poorer.

91 PERCENT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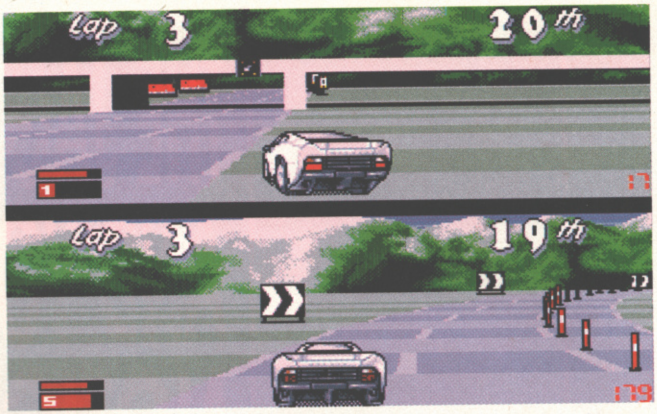
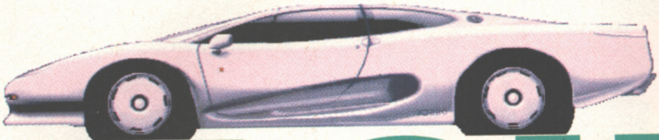
Come on – you must know the story by now. First there was Gremlin's *Lotus Turbo Challenge*, then there was *Lotus II*, and now there's *Lotus III* – oops! Sorry, now there's *Jaguar*, Core's stab at a sprite-based driving game, and it just begs for *Lotus* comparisons...



Here we are, playing the first English track in two player mode. As you can see, the AMIGA POWER team currently hold positions 19 and 20 – in a 20 car field. Oh dear...



JAGUAR X

Game: Jaguar XJ220
Publisher: Core Design
Price: £25.99
Authors: Mac Avory (design & coding), Jason Gee (graphics), Martin Iveson (sound) & others
Release: Out now

It seems that Gremlin really started something with their *Lotus Turbo Challenge* games – not just the resuscitation of the old *Pole Position*-style racing game, but the introduction of a whole new genre of uncannily similar looking split-screen, two-player racing games. At least, that's what Core must be hoping has happened, because if no-one else does a *Lotus*-lookalike supercar game they're going to look rather out-on-a-limb. With *Jaguar XJ220*, you see, Core have taken Gremlin's seminal *Lotus II* and replaced the Esprit by a Jaguar XJ220. And, er, that's it.

Okay, perhaps that's not entirely fair. And to make up for it, here's the 'descriptive' part of the review with the emphasis firmly placed on the differences between the two games.

Um. (This isn't easy.)

> **"Jaguar XJ200 is really quite fabulous"**

Right, got one. *Lotus II* featured eight courses, which were played through in order. To complete a course, and progress to the next one, you had to reach all its checkpoints within certain time limits. And that's all there was to it. It worked, but had a rather linear feel. *Jaguar* takes a rather more flexible approach, revolving around cash. It allows you to play three courses in each of 12 countries (that's 36 altogether, and they're racetracks rather than continuous roads), and once you've played through England's three courses you can choose which country you move onto next. The only snag is that you've got to pay to get there, and the further away it is the more it'll cost. It's just as well, then, that winning races nets you cash in the form of prize money – the higher placed you are the more you get. So all you've got to do is make sure you win enough races to keep paying the air fares.

The other thing that'll soak up money is your car. If you don't treat it gently, bits will start to need replacing, and if you can't afford them you're out of the game. This might all sound rather numerical and boring, but it fits in seamlessly with the driving sections and has the enormous advantage that one disastrous performance doesn't always mean The End – you've just got to make good your losses in the next round.

Another difference is the scenery, although it's more of an improvement than a difference. *Lotus II* looked nice, with its trackside ornamentation and weather conditions, but *Jaguar* really pulls out all the stops. There are tunnels, bridges, caves (complete with spooky stalactites), waterfalls, marshes, roadworks, the lot. Even Rolf Harris makes an appearance, complete with Stylophone, if you get as far

LOTUS II VS JAGUAR XJ220

In an attempt to be as fair as possible to both games, here's a quick break down on the strengths and weaknesses of them both...

Left: One time king of the road, Gremlin's *Lotus Turbo Challenge II*.

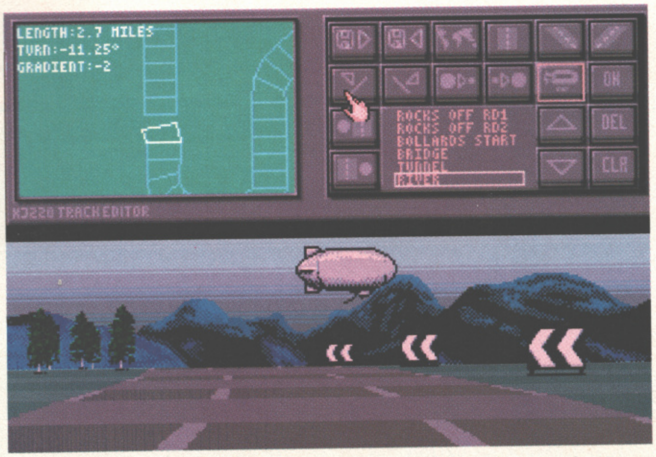
GRAPHICS
Lotus II 8 – Jaguar 9
As fast and slick as one could possibly hope for in both games. *Lotus*'s are perhaps more attractively drawn (I'm not too keen on Core's black outlines), but *Jaguar* heaves a lot more around the screen.

DRIVEABILITY
Lotus II 9 – Jaguar 9
There's really nothing in it. Both games strike the perfect balance between realism and fun.

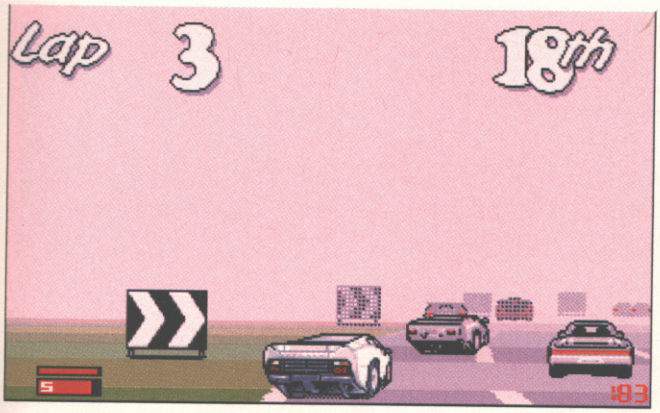
ADDICTIVENESS
Lotus II 8 – Jaguar 9
While they're both as unputdownable as each other to start off with, it's likely that *Jaguar*'s flexibility and general 'bigness' will make it the more viable long-term proposition.

FEATURES
Lotus II 8– Jaguar 8
Lotus II packs a two-computer, four-player option and a choice of two cars, but *Jaguar* holds it off with its track editor and more complicated moving-around system.

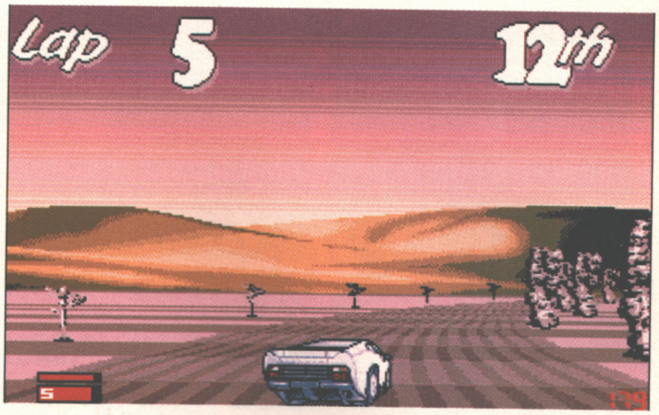
TOTAL
Lotus II 33 – Jaguar 35
A photo-finish, but it looks like *Jaguar*, by a whisker, is the one that gets to squirt champagne all over the place.



The track editor: Using one of the England tracks as the basis for my new creation, I'm currently putting together a nice little hairpin bend at the lip of this hill. Mmm, perhaps I should stick some rocks over on the left there too – that should obscure the view nicely.



Into the fog, a la *Lotus II*. *Jaguar* uses neat hazing effects and a lack of background detail to great effect – Gremlin certainly started something with this fog stuff, alright.



In the desert levels drivers must be wary of sandstorms. Masses of dust flies over the screen, making the task of negotiating those bends and obstacles that bit harder.

J220

as Australia. The variety is dazzling, and a great incentive to explore all 36 tracks. And *Lotus II*'s weather conditions have all been faithfully transplanted – rain, snow, night-time, fog – plus a slightly over-the-top sandstorm.

THE COMPETITION AND THE CAT

I'm struggling now, but here's another: the cars you race against. *Lotus II* put you up against other Lotuses. *Jaguar* has you racing against Ferraris, Lamborghinis, Bugattis, Porsches and (oh dear) Corvettes, and they all behave rather more intelligently than *Lotus II*'s. And each manufacturer has his own team racing against you, so as well as working your way up the drivers' rankings, it's up to you and 'Player 2' to do your bit for Jaguar in the constructors championship.

All this said, however, once you've hit the road the similarities flow thick and fast, and it's easy to see how the two games could be confused. *Jaguar* moves just as fast as *Lotus II*, the graphics are just as tasty, the road undulates just as, um, undulatingly and the way the car handles is virtually identical (ie just as realistic). Even *Lotus II*'s dearth of crashes has been included – you just slow down when you hit something, rather than exploding. The overall result is that *Jaguar* captures that 'driving feel' perfectly, and is brilliant fun to play and utterly addictive. Er, just like *Lotus II*. And, just like *Lotus II*, *Jaguar* really comes into its own as a fiercely competitive two-player game, the only difficulty being in trying to reach an agreement as to when to turn it off.

In fact, the two games are so outrageously similar (and both so good) that I'm not even going to attempt to pick a favourite. What a thought. It would be like trying to choose between Macallan and Lagavullin, or Roseanne and Have I Got News For You?, or Sonia and Sabrina. *(Eh? – Ed.)*

So what do you do? Do you buy this? Do you buy *Lotus II* (if you haven't already)? Do you buy both? Or do you wait for *Lotus III*? (Or do you simply pack it all in and take up a less mentally taxing pastime, like brass rubbing?) I suppose that if you really twisted my arm, really twisted it, I'd have said that *Jaguar XJ220*, with its as-yet-unmentioned track editor, more adventurous – and numerous – courses, and more varied opponents, is probably just (just) about the better buy. But there really isn't much in it.

Forgetting the comparisons for a moment, this is a really quite fabulous product that utterly restored my faith in computer games (I've been playing rather too many wargames recently, through no fault of my own). It's been running uninterrupted on my Amiga for days, and see no reason why I'm likely to switch it off in the near future. *(I do – here's another wargame – Ed.)*

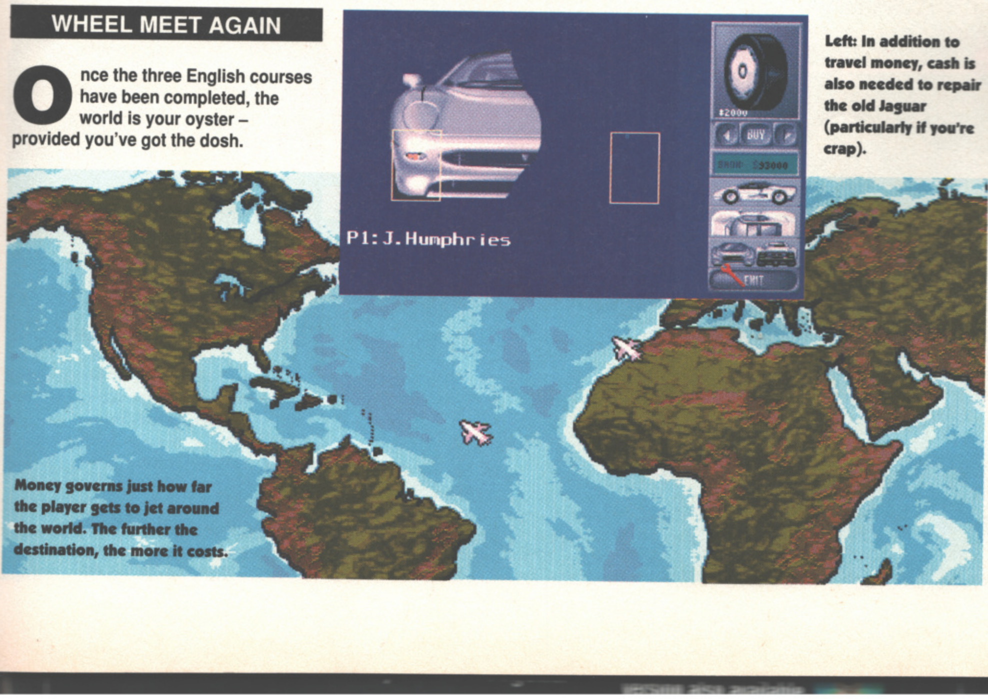
● ***JONATHAN DAVIES***

ON THE OTHER HAND...

I didn't like *Lotus 2* all that much, so I was hoping that *Jaguar* would show how it should have been done in the first place. And while it does have many commendable features (the track editor, the excellent weather effects, the lap-rather-than-course structure etc), I have to say I found it a lot duller even than *Lotus 2*. For about 90 percent of the time there are no other cars on the screen, and not having to reach any particular position in a race to qualify for the next one removes all sense of urgency or compulsion from the proceedings. There's an interesting 'rally' feel here, but if you're after arcade racing fun, forget it. In any case, this is nowhere near as good as *Vroom*, and barely worth 70 percent in my book. – *Stuart Campbell*

WHEEL MEET AGAIN

Once the three English courses have been completed, the world is your oyster – provided you've got the dosh.



Left: In addition to travel money, cash is also needed to repair the old Jaguar (particularly if you're crap).

Money governs just how far the player gets to jet around the world. The further the destination, the more it costs.

▲ **UPPERS** A top quality product, from the British Racing Green packaging down to the noise road cones make when they fly over your bonnet. The exploring-the-world element adds a welcome extra dimension, and the actual driving itself is above par.

▼ **DOWNERS** It depends on how you feel about lookalike games, of course, but it could hardly be called original. Look upon it as a 'tribute', or an 'elaboration', and you should be okay. Perhaps a little easy, though I'd have to play it for another week or two to be sure.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Arguably the best of the sprite-based driving games, and the most fun two people are likely to have together short of, erm... riding a tandem.

85 PERCENT

STR

New boys Rage promise top 3D football thrills in their first offering –

Game: Striker
Publisher: Rage
Price: £25.99
Authors: George Christophorou (programming), Andy Rixon & Karen Davies (graphics), Daevid Peel & Phill Tootill (sound)
Release: Out now

Can we get someone else onto the magazine team who likes football soon – please? I mean, I love the game and everything, and footy games on computer are always good fun (except when they're *Gazza's Super Soccer*), it's just that I'm starting to hear whistles in my sleep and I can't stop dreaming about Jimmy Greaves (but then, who can?), and I've even started walking down the street in 4-3-3 formation. But I guess I can survive for one more game, so let's take a look at the one they're all calling 'That funny 3D-ish one by the guys who did *Midnight Resistance*'.

THAT FUNNY 3D-ISH THING IN FULL

Striker uses the previously-unseen (on the Amiga) second-person perspective viewpoint, which means the action is viewed from one end of the pitch and from a position just behind and above the current location of the ball. As usual you control what the computer deems to be the player nearest the ball, and control itself is as simple as it comes, just left, right, up, down and fire to kick, with the same directions giving you a bit of aftertouch for those impressive swerving shots.

Immediate playability, then, is an area where *Striker* scores big points straight away. Forget the manual, just pick up the stick, click on a couple of menu options and you're right in the middle of the action, pulling off overhead kicks and dramatic diving headers with the best of 'em. Less happily, if you *do* read the manual and study the available options and attempt to take things a little more seriously, you find that, er, there isn't actually very much more to it.

FROM THE OFFENSE TO THE DEFENCE

And that's the big problem with *Striker* – there's not an awful lot to it. Rage themselves said (in our Footy Games Preview Special last month) that *Sensible Soccer* was the game they were going to have to compete with, and while *Striker* is pretty good fun by itself, when you put it up against the Sensible title it begins to look like a pretty poor second-best. Sorry about this, Rage, but you kind of asked for it...

> **"The big problem is there's not a lot to it"**

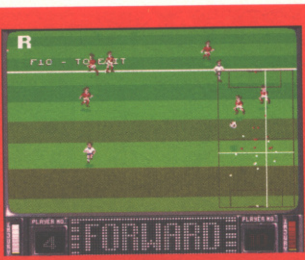
Ranged against *Sensible*'s multitude of domestic and international competitions, leagues and customisable tournaments for up to, er, lots of players, *Striker* lets you play either a single friendly game (one or two players) or in a pre-set knockout tournament (seven rounds) for one player only, and that's all. Where *Sensible* lets you choose from dozens of teams, each with individually-named and accurately-rendered players, alter their formations at will even in the middle of a game, make substitutions, completely redesign their strips or even change the players' names, *Striker* gives you 11 anonymous, identical players and a choice of formations, and that's all.

Sensible has a whole disk full of sampled crowd sounds which react intelligently to the play, *Striker* has the occasional almost-inaudible beep when the ball is kicked and a bit of a cheer when a goal goes in, and that's all. While Sensible is pixel-perfect in its accuracy despite the tiny graphics, *Striker*'s collision detection is so inaccurate it can make the game a real pain to play at times. The ball can fly around almost of it's own free will, and players who (painstaking examination of the slow-motion action replay will reveal) didn't come within three feet of it it can still nevertheless send it rocketing unpredictably across the pitch or into the net without any apparent player influence being exerted.

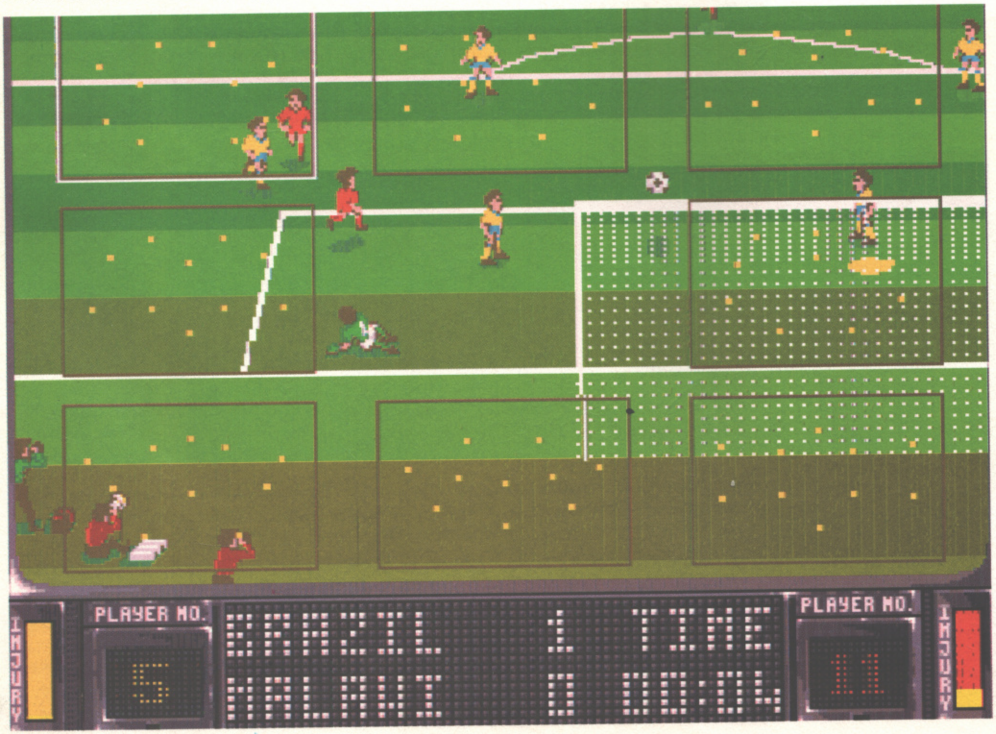
And, most annoyingly of all, while *Sensible*'s teams behave in ways identifiably similar to the real-life ones on which they're based (as far as general skill

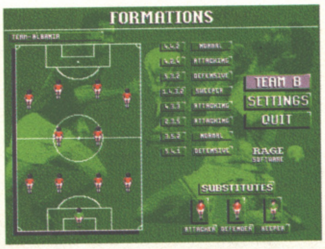
HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES

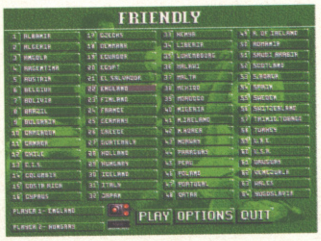
One of *Striker*'s best features is the replay mode. It works rather like a video recorder, in that you can play a goal or other piece of top footballing action forwards or backwards, at normal, fast or slow speeds, pause it, advance it or rewind it by a single frame. It's great fun just mucking around, in fact. Let's take advantage of it right now, and watch a bit of action from a tense England/Venezuela tussle...



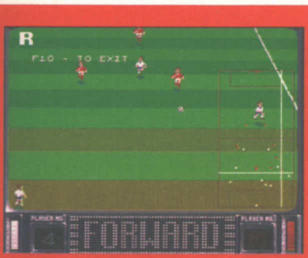
The Venezuelans try a long hopeful cross-pitch punt from the halfway line. Surely they won't catch the English defence out with tactics like that, Brian...



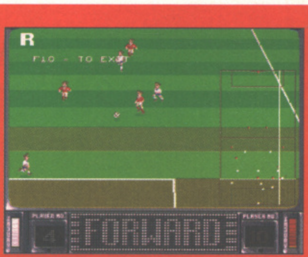




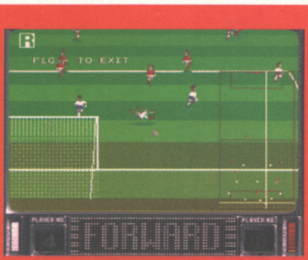
Top: If you're looking for the screen which lets you change the parameters of the game, it's hidden away on here.
Not quite so near the top: Teams? You want teams? We got 'em!
Left: Not only one of the most action-packed moments of the game, but also a handy guide to some of the major galaxies for budding footy astronomers out there. *(Ho ho ho. Not! – Ed.)*



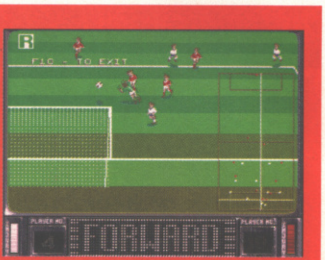
...but the midfield were having a little snooze, and the Venezuelan winger has found an overlap! He's speeding towards the penalty area and he's got a lot of space in front of him, Jimmy...



Look, he's cut in towards the box and I think he's going to let one fly! He hits it, it scorches goalwards, but can Woods get his hands to it? We're not sure...



What a save! The English keeper parries the ball wonderfully, but the defence run in the wrong direction, the South American striker picks up the loose ball, and Woods can't get back up in time...



...and it's a GOALLL! Oh no, this is a disaster for the England side! They'll have it all to do in the second half at this rate, Brian. Unless the boys can somehow find their second wind, this'll be a sad, sad day for English football...

RIKER

thrills in their first offering – and deliver. Now if only it wasn't for pesky old Sensible...

levels go, anyway), if you play anything closer in *Striker* than, say, Germany versus Trinidad And Tobago (with you as Germany, of course), the computer teams are irritatingly talented, in such a way as to make the game incredibly stop-start (you get the ball, run along a bit, one of the opposition players races up from behind and chops you down before you can work out what's going on, you take the free kick and the whole thing starts again). Repeatedly, in a second-round tournament match, my supposedly world-class German players were easily outpaced by cloggers from the 62nd-seeded (out of 64) Venezuelans, which is plainly silly as well as frustrating.

And so it goes on. While *Striker* is a neat little kickabout, *Sensible Soccer* is pretty much a total football experience, and putting the two head-to-head is like matching Brazil up with the Faroe Islands under-16 squad – extremely one-sided.

> **"Scores big points straight away"**

But anyway, for those of you who haven't been put off completely and are still reading (and I hope that's most of you, because this isn't nearly as bad a game as a direct comparison with *Sensible* makes it look, and it'd be a bit of a shame if it was overshadowed by it totally), what else is there to know about *Striker*?

Well, as I've said, the main problem is that there isn't a lot. There are still, though, many things to admire in this game. For a start, you can tailor the way players behave with the ball, choosing whether to have it sticking to their feet or flying around all over the place in *Kick Off 2* style (there are five different 'stickiness' settings to chose from).

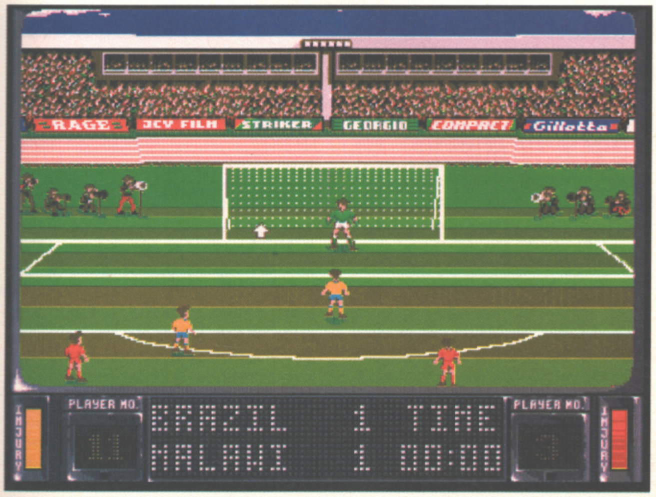
You get different types of weather and wind conditions, and free kicks are executed with a neat 'line-of-flight' indicator, although the ball doesn't always seem to follow it very closely, and you can choose whether tied games will be settled by replays, extra time or penalty shoot-outs.

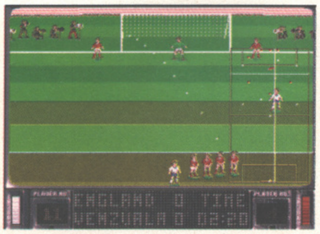
The animated electronic scoreboard is neat, too, and the toughness of most of the computer teams (although that's negated a bit by a recurrence of the old 'one-weakness-goalkeepers' syndrome) means that at least this won't be a game you beat in a couple of days then never play again (like, say, *John Barnes European Football*), and the enormous playability means that as a two-player game it'll give you endless entertainment.

THERE'S ONLY ONE GAME OF SOCCER

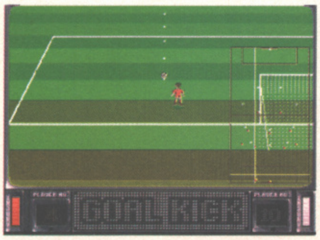
Striker is good fun, basically, and if we'd been reviewing it a month or two earlier it would have had a much easier ride – without *Sensible Soccer*'s appearance on the scene, this would have been, with the possible exception of *Manchester United Europe*, the best Amiga footy effort available. However, when it all comes down to it, there's only going to be one Amiga football title this year, and it's not this one.

● ***STUART CAMPBELL***





Free kick technique: blast the ball straight at the wall and flatten the swines...



Above: Brazil prepare to sensationally miss yet *another* penalty kick!
Right: Um, a goal kick. Note the interesting and informative electronic scoreboard.

UPPERS Fast-moving, immediately playable, and the 64 differently-skilled computer teams make for a wide-ranging net of difficulty levels. It's fun, quite simply, and nowhere near as frustrating as *Kick Off II*.

DOWNERS It's just a bit too unsophisticated for its own good, and proves very frustrating to play unless you take one of the top six sides. The wildly inaccurate collision detection is annoying, too.

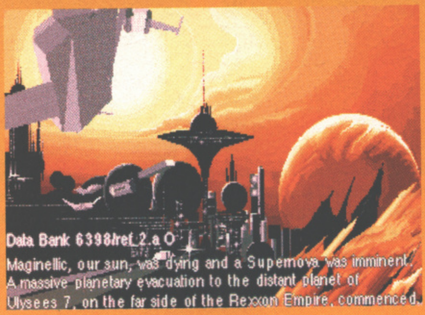
THE BOTTOM LINE
It's got the right idea, but at the end of the day *Striker* lacks the necessary polish to make it stand up to the sheer class of the all-conquering *Sensible Soccer*.

76 PERCENT

INTRO SEQUENCES A-GO-GO – THAT LENGTHY (INDEED 'EPIC') ANIMATED BIT IN FULL

Setting the scene properly is an important element in any game, particularly if you need to really create a sense of 'being there' in the player. However, there *are* limits – lots of atmospheric intro stuff is all very well, but shoving it down the players' throats at over-long and utterly tedious length is more than likely to set them screaming.

And that, as you may've guessed, is the case here. I can only think that *Epic*'s been named after the length of its intro...!



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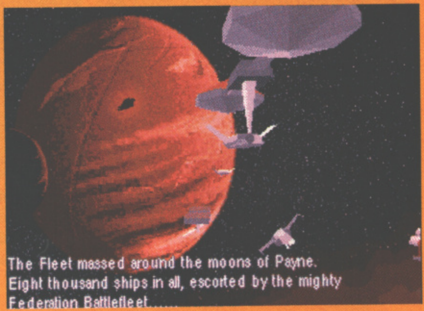
Maginellic, our sun, was dying and a Supernova was imminent. A massive planetary evacuation to the distant planet of Ulysees 7, on the far side of the Rexxon Empire, commenced.

Another day, another supernova. Time to make tracks for pastures new. Unbolt that kitchen sink, would you?

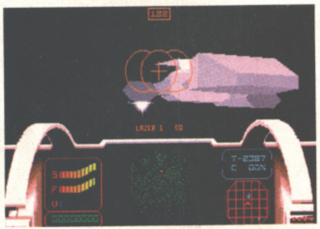


The Fleet massed around the moons of Payne. Eight thousand ships in all, escorted by the mighty Federation Battlefleet......

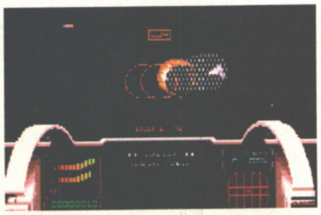
Well, we crammed the population into 8,000 spaceships. (Breathe in folks, and move along at the back there.)

Why is it the games with the biggest amount of hype always seem to be the most useless?

EPIC



Here we are bearing down on another unfortunate victim in one of the deep-space shoot-outs. But this time it's my own mothership! (Better not shoot it then.)



These 'ere graphics are pretty damn spammy. Enemy ships explode beautifully and go careening off in clouds of little white pixels! Pop! (Or something.)

Game: Epic
Publisher: Ocean
Price: £25.99
Authors: Digital Image Design
Release: Out now

Oh dear. And I was so looking forward to this. *Epic* has taken a long time to arrive, and you'd think that we'd be in for something pretty special considering the months of hype. Oh dear…

At first it looks good though, along similar lines to Origin's *Wing Commander* (out on the Amiga soon – see Things To Come this issue) in that it links a series of space-bound shoot-'em-up outings together with a fairly linear galaxy-spanning plot. (Talking of which, I get the impression that the game's designers spent an awful lot of time watching Battlestar Galactica. The ships, the missions and all are suspiciously reminiscent of that brave body of actors harried across space by the nasty Cylons.)

The game hangs on a series of missions, each with a specific objective and each with a time limit – I can't say I'm a great fan of the latter idea, as it gives a finite air to what is, after all, supposed to be an epic adventure. To give you some idea of what's in store if you chose to buy the game, I'll go through my first play of it in some detail.

After a series of graphically impressive, but tedious, intro screens – lots of spaceships zipping around Star Wars-style – I'm told to go and clear a path through the mine belt surrounding the Rexxon planet of Amragan Nine and destroy a tracking station that poses a threat to the human fleet. I've a starfighter to play with – and a 3D bunch of space mines to get through/blow up.

It's rather like a shooting gallery here. All you do is squirt laser fire at the mines, dispatch the one enemy fighter that has taken exception to your excursion, and watch the mission percentage figure tot up as you go. Your spaceship is quite easy to control and the quality of animation is impressive, which makes suspension of disbelief quite easy – it's not quite like 'being there', but quite jolly nevertheless.

Assuming that the first part of the mission is there just so I can get to grips with controlling the ship, it's straight then off to the next objective – blowing up the planet-bound transmitter. As I mentioned, there's a time limit on this – the pretext is that the planet goes through an eclipse during which it is incommunicado from the rest of the Rexxons, and that's when you've got to make your strike. Hitting [Help] gives you the co-ordinates of the tracking dish, making it very easy to find, and so I park the spaceship by it and pump everything I've got into the damn thing.

'Shoot the generator,' says the on-screen message. "Er, what generator?" says I. There I am, blasting gigatons of fiery death into the target, and I'm told to shoot at something I can't even see. Scratch one mission – the Rexxons know where the human's fleet is and I'm in the doghouse. (A colleague later told me that the generator is some way off to the right of the dish, and no, he couldn't find mention of it in the manual either.)

It's not 'Game Over' time, however – this is an awfully forgiving program, in that I'm given a bio-clone of myself with which to attempt the next mission; destroy some space ports and a mining complex. It's all very well, this continual self-regeneration, but it does nothing to build up a relationship between yourself and your game character.

> "It simply fails to deliver"

MISSION IMPLAUSABLE AGAIN

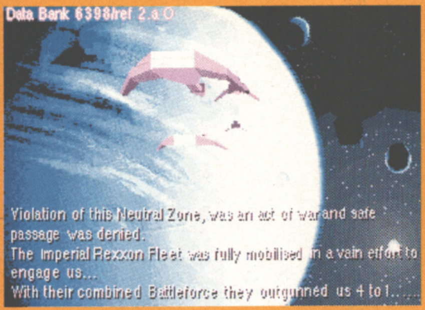
Back to the mission, then, and once again we've got a problem with the navigation data. I'm given co-ordinates for the target (some mines), it's blown to smithereens and 20-odd percent of the mission is complete. New co-ordinates please? No chance. It keeps sending me back to the minehead I've just destroyed. After a while it dawns that someone hasn't been too clever at programming this bit of the game, so I whizz off willy-nilly and, sure enough, there are more mine heads scattered about the surface of the planet – four in all. And no, that's not in the manual either.

EPIC: A GAME IN TROUBLE

What you may not realise from just playing the game is that *Epic*'s had a troubled time reaching us at all. For a start, it's been around a very long time – rumours of its release stretch back over a year, and (indeed) we've been expecting to finally get a finished review copy in for months now.

(Other reviews which you may have read in other magazines – usually glowing, we might add – which appeared up to six or seven months ago were based on fairly early demo versions, and thus are completely invalid. We'll say it now and we'll say it loud – reviewing unfinished games does the reader no service at all, and if you suspect a magazine of doing so, and there are a lot which are guilty in this instance, you should either make their lives hell or simply stop buying their mag. End of preaching.)

On top of these problems, however, come those the game faced in its first weeks of release. Many copies of the initial version, you see, crashed consistently – apparently a 'duplication error' – and while that's now fixed, an awful lot of keen purchasers had to return their copies to the shops. All *Epics* on sale now, however, should be okay – at least in that they won't crash. They will, however, feature the bugs, programming mistakes and downright stupidity covered in the main review...



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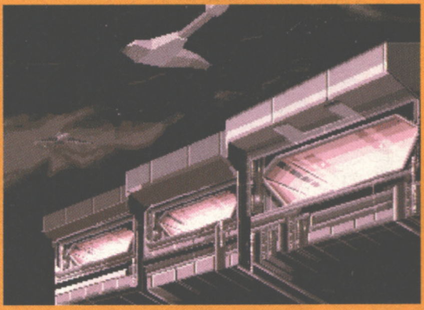
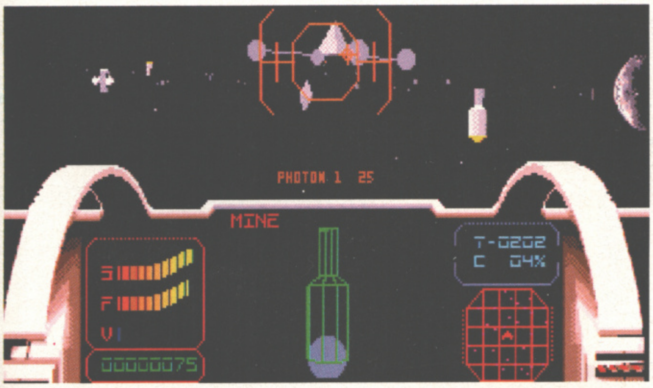
Violation of this Neutral Zone, was an act of war and safe passage was denied.
The Imperial Rexxon Fleet was fully mobilised in a vain effort to engage us...
With their combined Battleforce they outgunned us 4 to 1......

Oh dear, the Rexxons aren't too keen on trespassers. (Someone write us a space shoot-'em-up, quick!)

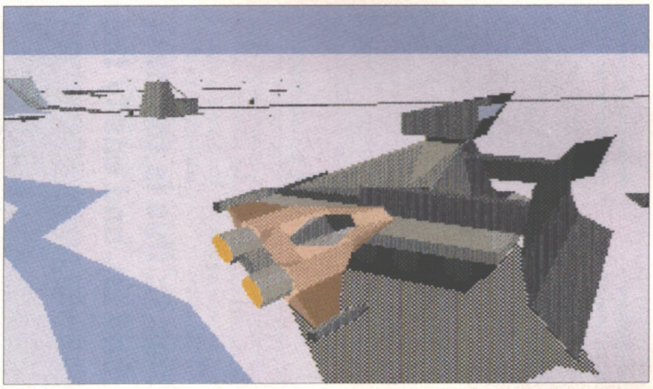


And before you know it, someone whips out an Amiga and programs a lethal-looking ray-traced battle fleet!

You can stop programming now. (No, really – we've quite enough animations to be going on with thanks.)



Uh-oh, a vicious looking space mine. But no worries – my photon cannon will take it out with a single blast. (This first mission is all a bit too easy really.)



A-ha! A vicious looking mining complex. But no worries – my photon cannon will make mincemeat of the Rexxons. (This second mission is all a bit too easy really too.)

After a string of impressive titles, here Ocean get it wrong in a spectacular way.

Ah yes, the manual. I'll tell you one thing that is in the manual – a grottily written affair set in an eye-straining typeface, by the way – and that's the definition of an ion as: '...a particle of *FILL IN LATER*' (sic). And in the German section, it's: Ein Partikel von *FILL IN LATER*. So why do I get the impression that parts of this game are unfinished?

Anyway, back to the game, and after several abortive efforts at this second mission it is completed with relative ease once I know where the targets are – even the enemy fighters sent out to stop me cause little concern.

I feel I'm just about getting the hang of things, having learned to use my initiative a bit more than I thought I would, when I hear that the Rexxons have got word from Amragan that humans are about, and the main battle fleet is headed for the Federation's armada. It's here that the most stupid, idiotic, mind-numbingly, incomprehensibly dumb feature of the game comes in – the cheat. I'm out there, once again in the starfighter, as streams of Rexxon ships fly in with weapons blazing, doing their best to destroy the Federation ships. Fuel is dwindling and I've only got limited weapons; what do I do?

The answer is easy. Hit [Enter] on the keypad – sorry you A600 owners – and I've got them all back again. Stupid, stupid, stupid. Sure, I think it's fine for game designers to put in an obscure cheat that can be leaked out in six months' time – but for heaven's sake, don't put it on the pilot control card! If you're about to get wiped out in a battle, there's just no way you're not going to hit the cheat button. What's next? Well, according to the messages on-screen, I'm a great hero (yeah, yeah, let's have some action), my name will be revered throughout all eternity and the Rexxons are defeated. Er, game over. Playing time three hours.

THE EPICENTRE OF A REAL EPIC

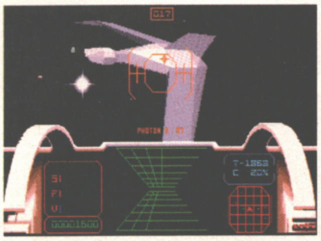
Now hold on a minute there, bub. Three missions, the first of which I fouled up, and I've won?! What's going on? I thought this was *Epic*, 'a sci-fi extravaganza featuring spectacular graphics and stunning gameplay.' Okay, the graphics are very nice – the programmers, DiD, are the folk who did *RoboCop 3* – but it's all a bit short and a little bit easy once you've figured out that the mission details amount to little more than pointing you in the rough direction of where the action is.

So what went wrong? Well, seems me fluffing the first mission rather mucked up the flow of the whole game. It turns out that if I'd hit that tracking station (hey, I tried right?) back at the front end of the game, the Rexxons would never have come out in such force on mission 3, thus dragging the game into further missions.

In the spirit of fair play, I *did* go back to the beginning and try out some of the missions I'd missed through my pre-emptive, complete and utter destruction of the Rexxon menace – but soooooory guys. Mission 4 entails flying to a magma cannon and blowing it up, a two-minute job. Mission 6 entails flying to a command centre and blowing it up, another two-minute job. And Mission 7 is to destroy the entire enemy fleet – and we've been here before, haven't we guys?

Summing up is simple. Sorry, but this game is just not up to the mark. It suffers that most typical of failings, great graphics but crop gameplay. I feel disappointed and cheated by a game that promises so much but simply fails to deliver. Wait for *Wing Commander*, or dust off your copy of *Elite*. I never thought I'd use Wayne-speak, but as far as this game goes it's *Epic* – not!

● ***KARL FOSTER***



Eat photon, Klingon scum! Oh, sorry Mr Rexxon. (Could've sworn you were a Klingon Bird of Prey there.)

▲ **UPPERS** Very good 3D graphics, lots of big sound effects and some pretty trick weaponry make for a limited amount of spectacular screen time. It's slick.

▼ **DOWNERS** ...but slick is one thing it *isn't* when you look beneath the surface. It's way too easy, its logic seems to collapse if you fail the first mission, and it wastes too much computing power on irrelevant between-mission sequences.

THE BOTTOM LINE
Put that wallet away. The only thing that's epic about this one is how long we've had to wait for it. It scores on the graphics, and can be initially fun, but really – it's no game.

34 PERCENT

SENSIBLE SOCCER

Publisher: Renegade
Authors: Sensible Software
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now
Other details: Runs fine on half meg Amigas

Let's be completely up front about it: this is the best two player game we've ever played (yes, better than *Speedball 2*!), and easily the best footy game of the year.

You've waited. And waited. You've suffered the hype. You've read the 'reviews' of the half-finished demo version elsewhere. But now, *Sensible Soccer* really is finished, really is ready, and really is here in front of me as I type. No, really. And it's totally wonderful. Surprise surprise.

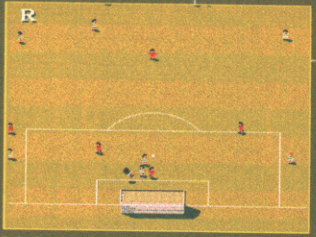
But first, the facts. *Sensible Soccer* gives you 100 (32 international, 64 European club) realistic teams (ie Germany are better than Iceland), each with 16 currently up-to-date players. You can change the names of the teams and players at will, as well as the colours and designs of the team strips, the colours of the players themselves, and even the colour of their hair. Your chosen (or customised) team can play (depending on whether you're in club or international mode) in any of the three major European club competitions, a European superleague, the European Championships (which should be in progress as you read this), a knock-out international Euro-Cup, a League Of Nations, a league or cup competition of your own design, or a simple friendly. If you like, you can even watch two computer-controlled sides of your choice play a friendly against each other and try to pick

"Don't even think about any other footy game"

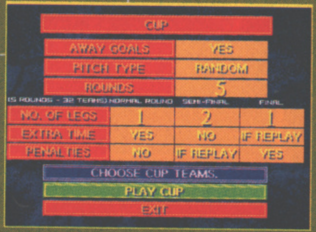
human players.

During play you can have an action replay at any point (normal or slow motion, and you get them automatically after goals, although you can switch this feature off if you want), and you can choose to save the replay into the optional end-game highlights sequence which replays up to 10 incidents from the previous game in chronological order and can be saved onto disk to impress your friends with at a later date. Any time the ball goes out of play, you can call up your bench and make substitutions or change your formation (and for once, it makes a tangible difference), or simply exhort your team to desperate attack or defence. You can start a tournament, stop half-way through, play a couple of friendlies, start a completely different tournament, then stop and rejoin the first one again at the point you left it, without having to resort to saving at any time. There's more, but how much do you need?

Okay, still awake out there? I know this sounds like Sensible wrote it themselves so far, but there's a reason. All the other footy games we've looked at recently (*John Barnes*, *Striker*, *Euro Football Champ*) have been fun in their own ways, but they've all shared a common flaw – having no depth whatsoever. In *John Barnes* you get eight teams and one competition – you can complete the whole thing in a day and not



Fabulous action as Aberdeen slam another goal past the hapless Celtic defence...

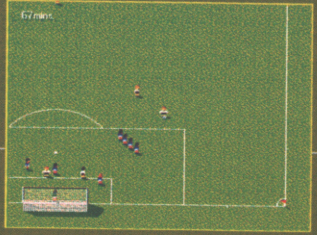


CUP

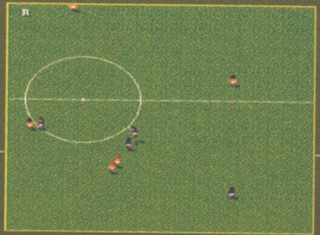
AWAY GOALS	YES
PITCH TYPE	RANDOM
ROUNDS	5

(5 ROUNDS - 32 TEAMS)	NORMAL ROUND	SEMI-FINAL	FINAL
NO. OF LEGS	1	2	1
EXTRA TIME	YES	NO	IF REPLAY
PENALTIES	NO	IF REPLAY	YES

Cup design. "And what kind of tea would you like served at half-time, sir?"



Murdo's life flashed before him as Klinsmann lined up to take the free kick...

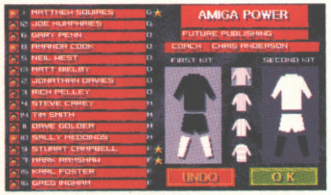


McCoist uses his power of levitation to good effect to gain height in the midfield.

controlled sides of your choice play a friendly against each other and try to pick up some tactical tips.

There are seven different types of pitch to play on, which you can select manually, take randomly, or have accurately mapped to the time of year each game is taking place (so that, for example, in a league which starts in January – you can, of course, choose when you want it to begin – there'll be more icy pitches at the start, but as the league progresses into summer dry, hard pitches become more commonplace). You can save custom team data or half-finished tournaments to disk at any time (save slots provided on the game disk for three sets of customised teams), and in competitions you can have up to 20 teams, any or all of which can be controlled by teams and one competition – you can complete the whole thing in a day and not be overly fussed about playing it again. *Striker* gives you a single, even less sophisticated tournament or straightforward friendlies, and *Euro Football Champ* is the thinnest of the lot, with practically no structure at all beyond the matches themselves.

Sensible Soccer, however, is a game that will in all probability last you as long as your Amiga does. In solo mode the difficulty is perfectly judged for a constant challenge (you can beat Holland in your first game if you're very good or very lucky, but a drubbing from San Marino is always a possibility however much you practice), but the game's biggest strength lies when you get a few chums together for a tournament (something that *Striker* and *Euro Football Champ* sadly lack), and with up to 20 players catered for most people won't have problems giving all their pals a game. (In fact, with the whole AMIGA POWER crew and all their friends all playing at once, there was still room for the entire staff of ST Format to join in). If you ever exhaust all the possibilities of this game, contact The Guinness Book Of Records pronto, 'cos the chances are you'll be at least 140.



1	MATTHEW SQUIRES	G ★
12	JOE HUMPHRIES	G
6	GARY PENN	D
8	AMANDA COOK	D
5	NEIL WEST	D
13	MATT BIELBY	D
2	JONATHAN DAVIES	D
3	RICH PELLEY	D
4	STEVE CAREY	M
14	TIM SMITH	M
11	DAVE GOLDER	M
10	SALLY MEDDINGS	M
9	STUART CAMPBELL	F ★
7	MARK RAMSHAW	F ★
15	KARL FOSTER	F
16	GREG INGHAM	F

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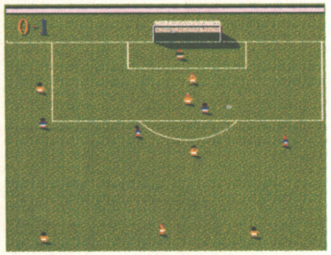
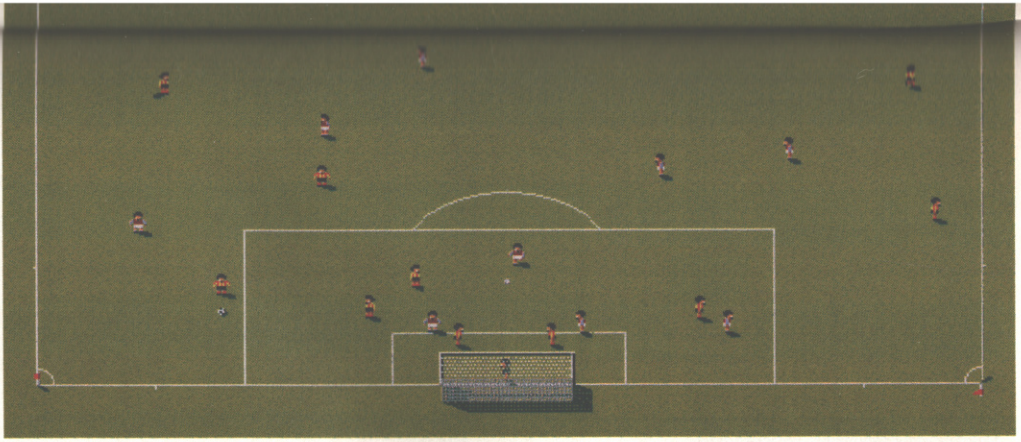
Get your authentic AMIGA POWER football strips from the mail order department now!



End-game highlights – let's watch Scotland beating Holland just one more time, eh?

THE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT

'Yes, yes, Stuart', you all cry, 'so we know you love it, but WHY, exactly?' Well, it's like this. Everything that people used to say about *Kick Off 2* is true, but it's true about *Sensible Soccer*. This is true instinctive control (sliding tackles, volleys, diving headers are all within a single touch of the fire button), this is true perfect playability, this is a true football simulation as well as being a fabulous game. The single-touch pixel-perfect passing makes the creation of beautiful flowing moves easier than falling out of a rowing-boat off Copenhagen, and the scale of the graphics actually gives you a chance to use tactics, planning and skill.. The constant and ever-changing crowd noise (the crowd actually react to events on the pitch in a realistic and geographically-sensitive manner) gives the game an atmosphere so close to the real thing that you'll find yourself completely immersed in it inside 60 seconds.



The goalkeepers are spot on too. They're computer-controlled and very good, but – and here's the crucial bit – they're still fallible, in that every now and again a speculative 40-yarder or a half-hit daisy-cutter will squirm out of their grasp or under their body. There's no simple exploiting of algorithmic weaknesses here, the best tactic is to rain in shots from all angles and ranges and try all sorts of different approaches – in fact, it's just like the real thing.

> "Sensible Soccer will last you as long as the Amiga does"

And if there's one thing that makes *Sensible Soccer* stand out from the crowd (and especially from KO2), it's that – from the first kick to the end of the penalty shoot-out, this feels like real football, not like some crazy pinball game or a dull slog up and down the middle of the park. It takes what good points there were in the *Kick Off* games and expands infinitely upon them, adds the best bits of *Speedball 2* and every other football game ever, and then executes the whole thing to a level only previously seen in *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker* and *F1 Grand Prix*.

Even up to about a week before it was finally finished, I had doubts over whether this game was going to fulfil its promise. I was wrong. It's damn near perfect. Don't even think about buying another football game until you've got this one.

● ***STUART CAMPBELL***

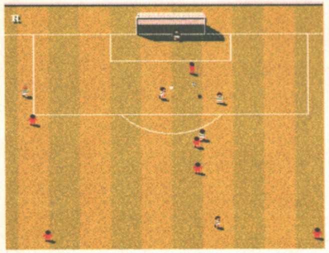
UPPERS Unbelievably playable, incomparably realistic, totally comprehensive, infinitely long-lasting, amazingly atmospheric, supremely entertaining... I've got a whole thesaurus full of superlatives here, how many would you like?

DOWNERS Um... I suppose it could occasionally be a bit better at judging which was the best player for you to be in control of. And world rather than just European teams would have been nice. But then, you can make those yourself.

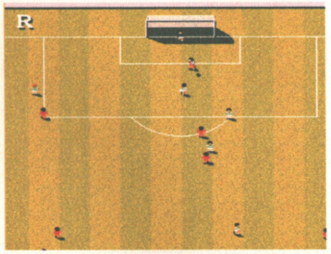
THE BOTTOM LINE

One of the Amiga's top three games of all time, and definitely, without the merest inkling of a suggestion of a shadow of a doubt, the best football game ever. What did you really expect?

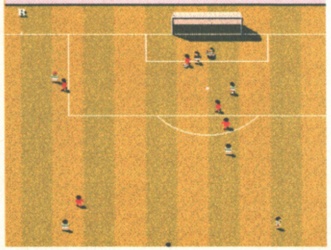
93 PERCENT



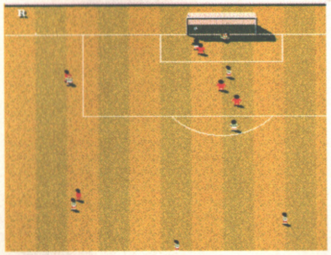
That winning goal in full – Eoin Jess cracks a vicious swerver towards the Celtic net...



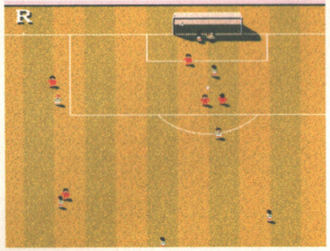
But before the keeper can get to it, Hans Gillhaus intercepts brilliantly in the box...



...evades a scything tackle from Creaney as Pat Bonner comes out of his goal...



...and thumps the ball gleefully into the unguarded net from four yards. Goal!



Gillhaus heads for the centre as the recriminations start amongst the Celtic four.

Game: The Secret Of Monkey Island 2: LeChuck's Revenge
Publisher: US Gold
Price: £37.99
Authors: Ron Gilbert (Design) & The Lucasfilm Games Team
Release: Out now

Humour in computer games is a rare and beautiful thing. But why's it so rare? Well, it has been argued (quite a few times actually) that comedy is such a subjective thing you'd have problems making it appeal to a wide audience, but I can't see it. (Comedy films and TV shows wouldn't be big hits if that was true.) No, I reckon the real reason there aren't many (deliberately) funny computer games is that most programmers and designers aren't very funny people. Most are far too serious for their own good – and yours and mine for that matter.

> "By and large a sheer delight to play"

Not so the guys and gals at Lucasfilm. They like a laugh as much as the next man – as they have so ably demonstrated with their range of graphic adventures, particularly *Maniac Mansion*, the underrated *Zak McKraken*, and, of course, *The Secret Of Monkey Island*. These are games that were good anyway, but made great – and so much more playable – by not being sober.

ANOTHER GUYBRUSH WITH SUCCESS

And now here's this: the eagerly awaited sequel to the biggest and best of what we might call Lucasfilm's comedy adventures, *Monkey Island* – a real AMIGA POWER favourite, and arguably one of the most significant games of the last five years. The great news is that, although this new game is a definite improvement over the original in a number of significant ways, it retains its soul and proves just as entertaining (see THE SECRETS OF MONKEY ISLAND'S SUCCESS). In short, it's just as much a doozy as its predecessor.

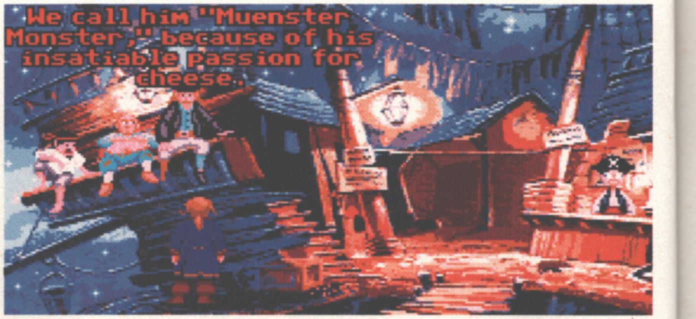
Monkey Island 2's story begins not where the first episode left off, but with Guybrush Threepwood hanging around in a pit where he's discovered by the light of his life, Elaine Marley. She wants to know how he got into this predicament, so Guybrush explains and the adventure itself begins... as a flashback!

BABY, BABY, BABY LITE MY WAY

From the word go, both the jokes and the user-friendly nature of the game makes themselves apparent – sometimes intrinsically linked. For instance, when you first start the game you can choose between *Monkey Island 2* ("I want it ALL! ALL the puzzles! ALL the work!"), which is the full blown adventure, or *Monkey 2 Lite* ("I've never played an adventure game before. I'm scared.") which has less puzzles. It's funny, but it's also a considerate touch.

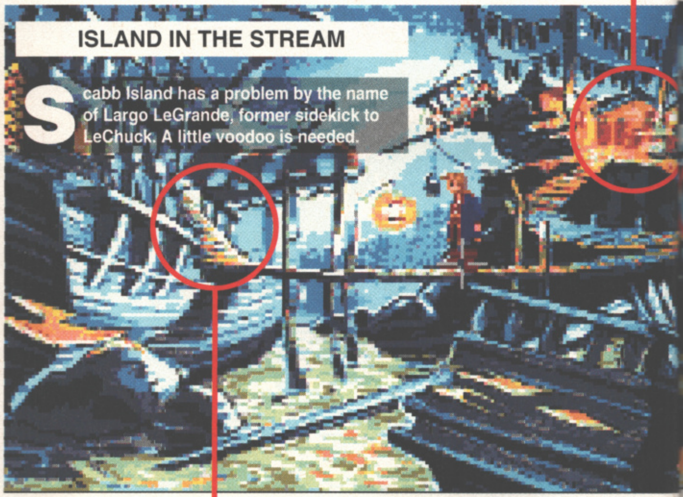
Even if you go for the full-blown adventure, however, it's far less intimidating than many similar games – you never worry that you might just get stuck and unable to continue. One reason for this is that making life-threatening mistakes during play is impossible – you know that you will win at some point, it just might take a lot longer than is necessary. Thus a very welcome confidence is instilled in any player – in some ways it's less of an adventure game, as such, than an interactive 'experience', and you find yourself coming back to it as you would a good book.

Let's look at it as if it *were* a book then. This particular novel isn't very deep – it's more a punchy, wacky-zany-crazy short story concentrating on inoffensive humour. An abundance of encounters with, and references to, characters and exploits from the first adventure do well to create a sense of belonging, and the non-interactive 'cut-scenes' (where the action momentarily shifts to the main baddie or some other character, where you see something significant happen, then flicks



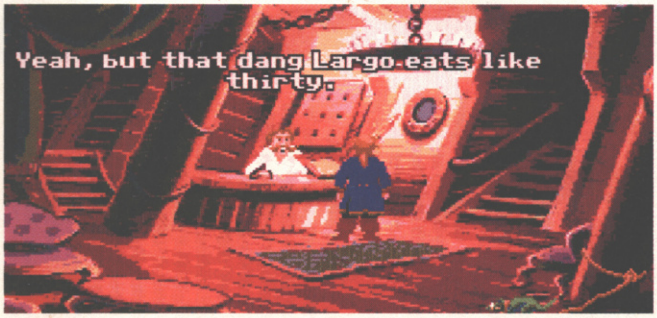
We call him "Muenster Monster," because of his insatiable passion for cheese.

Familiar faces are found throughout *Monkey Island 2*. Guybrush meets the men of low moral fiber (sic) and their tasty rat at the local Laundry, run by Mad Marty. They have a tale to tell and, more importantly, are willing to share their fortune...



ISLAND IN THE STREAM

Scabb Island has a problem by the name of Largo LeGrande, former sidekick to LeChuck. A little voodoo is needed.

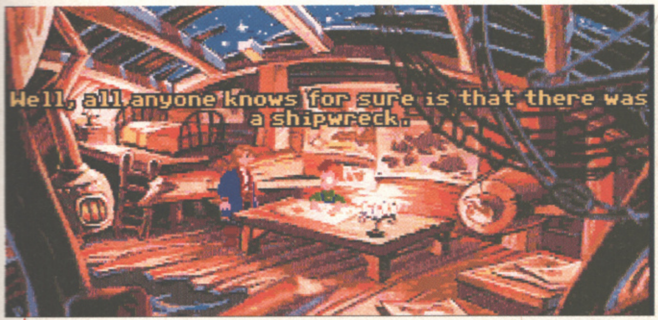


Yeah, but that dang Largo eats like thirty.

There's only one room for rent in the local inn – and it's Largo's! The sap behind the counter won't let you in (surprise, surprise) but he does own a baby crocodile with strange tastes. High time a diversion was in order, methinks!

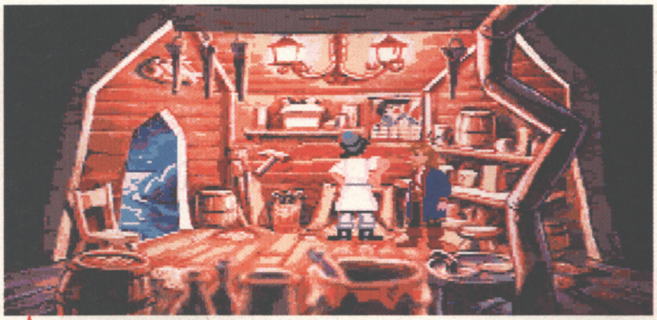
Guybrush is back in the most eagerly awaited adventure of modern times...

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND 2

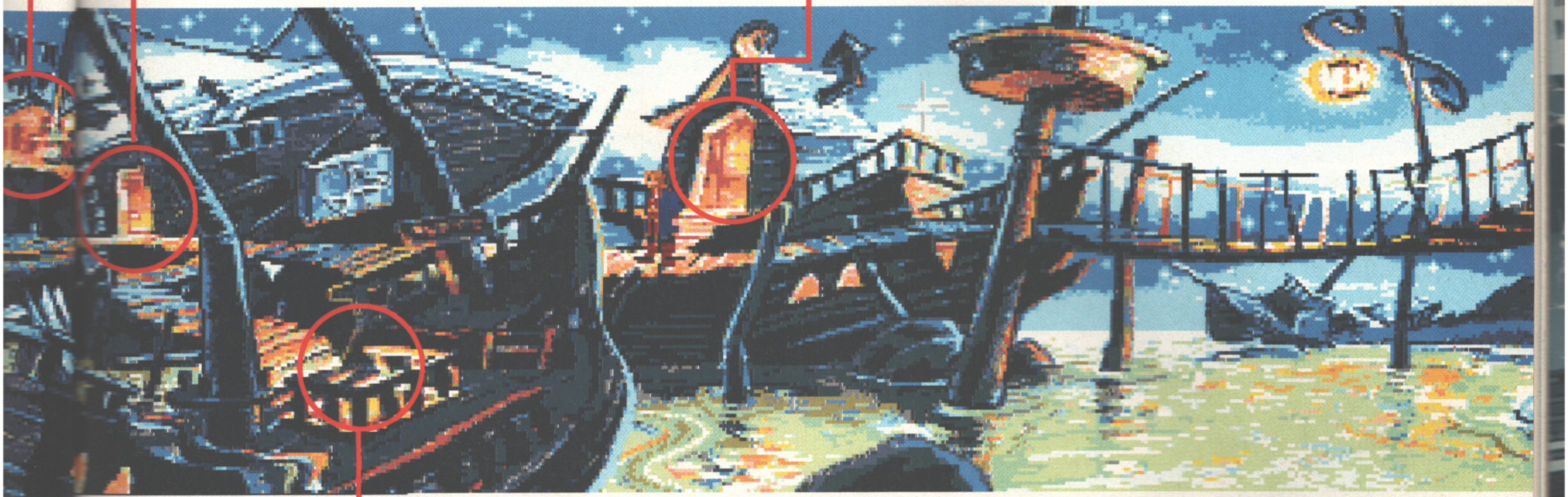


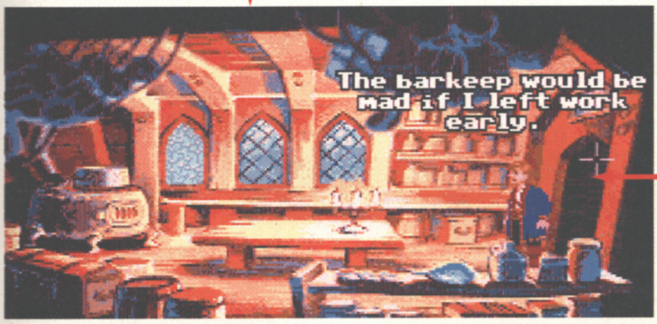
Well, all anyone knows for sure is that there was a shipwreck.

Wally, the dreary monocle-wearing cartographer, does work which is useless – to Guybrush, at any rate. Still, there's something about him which catches the eye... (He said, in a cryptic clue-ish kind of a way...)



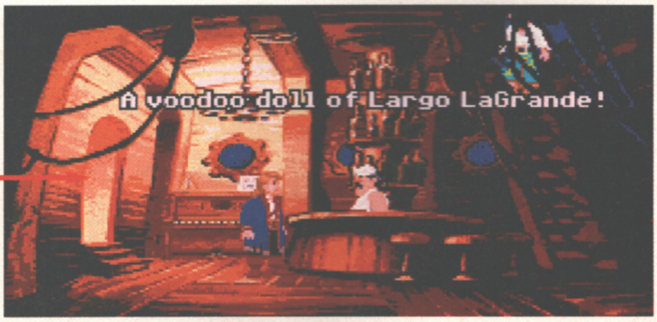
Woody the Woodsmith lets Gaybrush look but not touch. He likes everything in its place and goes to great lengths to point out that it's all *his* stuff. There's a chucklesome Wood Chuck 'sketch' to be had here, too.





The barkeep would be mad if I left work early.

Seeing as Largo's stolen all Guybrush's dosh, he needs some more to aid his escape from Scabb Island. A job would be handy, but the most recent vacancy, being chef at the local pub, has been filled. Maybe it's time it was emptied...



A voodoo doll of Largo LaGrande!

The barman in Woodtick's pub won't sell Guybrush any grog. And he won't stand up to Largo, either. He runs an honest, clean house – or so he'd like to think... Here he gives Guybrush a bit of advice on how to defeat Largo.

back to your own predicament) serve to enhance the cinematic feel.

As in all good novels, the pace varies, although not always for the best – for example, the exploration and conversations on Phatt Island drag on a bit at times. On the whole, though, the dialogue, characters and situations are judged just right, with more than enough variety to keep you from getting bored, yet without moving everything on so fast that you begin to feel lost. The situations are generally completely unbelievable too, and this is used to good effect – it's all so far removed from the real world that you just can't help being drawn into it. The puzzles don't seem like individual problems, as they so often do in adventures of this type, but as just one part of a cohesive whole – and solving them is all the more rewarding for that.

GORILLA TACTICS – NIT PICKING

However, with *Monkey Island 2* being such a big-time release, it's only fair to stop getting carried away with praise (though it deserves praise, make no mistake about that) for a moment, and to step back and take a look at some of its faults. It does have them, and I sincerely hope they can be smoothed out in time for another sequel – otherwise I can't see how a third *Monkey Island* will be practical on the Amiga.

For a start, *Monkey Island 2* lacks some of the charm of the first instalment, partly because we've seen something similar before – the element of surprise is lost – but also because expectations are so high this time round. To be honest, I don't see how this could have been avoided.

It's not so easy to pardon the level of disk swapping and accessing involved, though. Installation on hard disk is recommended, but for the sake of the majority of you out there, I also had a go at playing *Monkey Island 2* from good old floppies. Ouch.

It takes a good 10 minutes and over half a dozen disk swaps to get started – and that's skipping the film-like title and introductory sequences. Loading a previously saved position from scratch can take a further five minutes and involve yet another half a dozen or so disk swaps.

As always, all this malarkey taints the suspension of disbelief something cronic, and does no justice at all to the carefully crafted atmosphere. Here's an example of the sort of thing I mean, and one of the worst instances. Bad guy Largo walks into a bar and spits – and at this point the screen goes blank, the music stops and you are asked to insert Disk 3. The screen is blanked again and the music plays

→

N
S
Scabb Island
1
2
3
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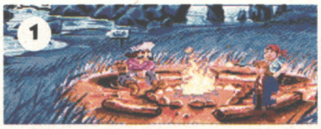
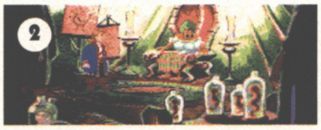
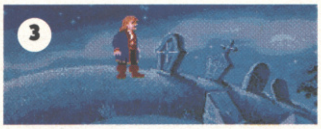
PART 1: THE LARGO EMBARGO
As the song says, 'I'd rather be a pirate on Scabb than a scab on a pirate...' Welcome to Scabb Island, which is where Guybrush's flashback – and the adventure – begins.



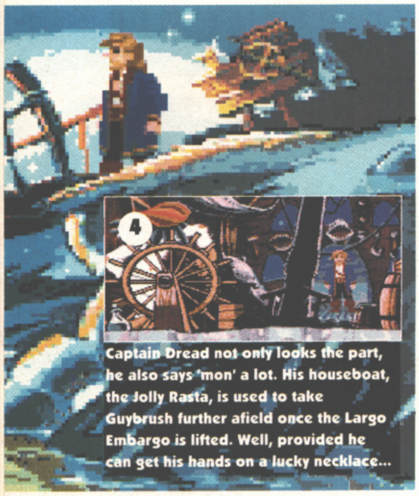
Before you get down to the nitty gritty you see Guybrush on the beach, telling Bart 'n' Fink about how he disposed of LeChuck. These two jovial lads also have plenty to say for themselves – provided Guybrush gives them the chance.



To make a voodoo doll you need Guybrush's old mate the Voodoo Woman. She lives in a hut on the swamp, an empty coffin providing the transport.



The Cemetery. You can't enter the tombs, but you can read the gravestones. 'Here Lies Nibbles the Dog. He was a bad dog. We're glad he's dead,' says one. Interestingly enough, one of Largo's relatives is buried on the hillside yonder...



Captain Dread not only looks the part, he also says 'mon' a lot. His houseboat, the Jolly Rasta, is used to take Guybrush further afield once the Largo Embargo is lifted. Well, provided he can get his hands on a lucky necklace...

for a few seconds more before you have to insert Disk 2. Eventually a close-up of Largo's green glob of gob is shown flying across the room! Now this scene would probably look fabulous in a more fluid state, but from floppy disk it's shown up for the stilted series of still frames it really is.

Other quibbles? Well, I'm surprised that the sense of humour doesn't extend to the 'Please Insert Disk...' messages. We know it has to be done with this product, so why not make light of the fact? Also, the game could do with being slightly more consistent, or just plain cleverer, in the way it deals with the various possible permutations there are on the order of events.

Let me explain: for example, I saw Captain Dread before going back to the beach for another chat with Bart 'n' Fink. They suggested I went to see Captain Dread and Guybrush spoke as though he'd never been there. Surely the dialogue could have been adapted accordingly? (Of course, nearly every adventure game suffers from this sort of problem, it's just that *Monkey Island 2* is so slick in other areas, what weaknesses there are somehow become much more glaringly obvious.)

TREASURE BURIED IN THE DISKS

And last, but not least, on the whinging front: Lucasfilm Games are attempting to create a film-like experience here, and yet the AmigaDos and Workbench screens are displayed in all their blue and white ugliness during the initial stages of loading. Am I being pedantic? No, I'd like to have experienced a cinematic event from start to finish.

This all said, however, *Monkey Island 2* is still a great game. You must bear in mind that it's not been built for the standard Amiga – although I reckon it could have been if a top coder had been allowed to get his hands on it – and that you're going to suffer moments of frustration if you try and run it off the floppies, but if you own a hard drive I'd whole-heartedly recommend it.

Monkey Island 2 is, by and large, a sheer delight to play. Certainly, compared to a great many other Amiga releases, similar adventures in particular, *Monkey Island 2* is quite excellent – a better game than its illustrious predecessor even. Sure, it's not a completely seamless experience, not yet, and I'm disappointed by the very high price tag, but few games will make you smile like this one will.

● ***GARY PENN***

THE SECRETS OF MONKEY ISLAND'S SUCCESS

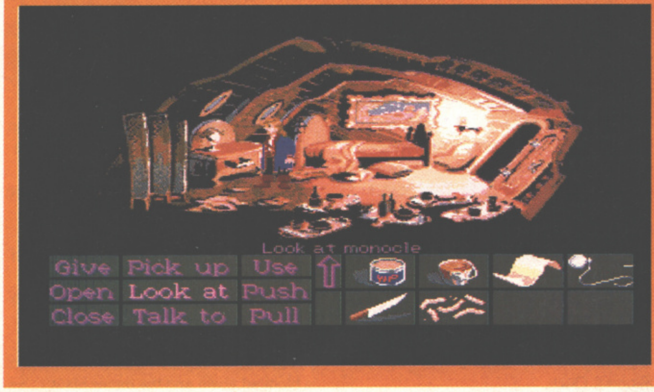
As you can see, the scenery looks jolly pleasant. There's a healthy attention to detail, appropriate and atmospheric lighting and a sense of depth (objects closest to the viewer are blurred). There are a few special effects, but most fall flat due to lack of size and aural accompaniment.

However, on the plus side, the scrolling is smoother than that in the first game (but still not as slick as it should be), though the way the characters shrink or grow when they move 'in' or 'out' of the screen, and the way their heads and mouths move to indicate speech, all works well. The absence of close-up shots isn't very noticeable either.

GUYBRUSH'S COMMANDS

The mouse-and-keyboard-driven interface has been tweaked slightly for added user friendliness. For a start, the text for the commands is physically larger, and there are only nine commands instead of *Monkey Island's 12*.

When you want Guybrush to walk somewhere, you simply point and click to the destination on the Action Window. And when you want him to talk to someone, you select 'Talk to' and then point and click on the person for a list of questions or replies. It's that simple, albeit a little sluggish at times for some strange reason.



GUYBRUSH'S INVENTORY

Objects in Guybrush's inventory are shown as pictures, not words, which makes selecting them easier. Hoorah!

SOUNDING OFF ABOUT iMUSE

The iMUSE (interactive MUsic and Sound Effects) system is theoretically used to tailor the soundtrack and spot effects to suit the mood of the action. But it doesn't work – certainly not on my one megabyte machine. I'd like to have heard some spot effects as well as music throughout, but *Monkey Island 2* is played mainly in silence. Boo, hiss.

UPPERS Gorgeous graphics – the lush scenery doesn't look computery at all, and is all the more atmospheric for it – and with so many groansome gags on offer there's a laugh and a half of full cream fun for everyone. That the user interface is superb, the plot witty and suitably twisting, and the tone perfect almost goes without saying – these were the great plus points of the first game, and little has changed.

DOWNERS Unless you have a hard disk drive you can't ignore the fact that there are 11 disks and plenty of swapping involved, which does mar the proceedings to a greater or less extent, depending on how easily annoyed you are. It's a pity the music system doesn't work as well as it might, too.

THE BOTTOM LINE

A worthy sequel, as they say – and to be a worthy sequel to the excellent *Monkey Island* takes some doing – despite a few flaws. Essential if you enjoyed the first game (and, let's be honest, who didn't?), with enough in the way of improvements and changes to keep you on your toes.

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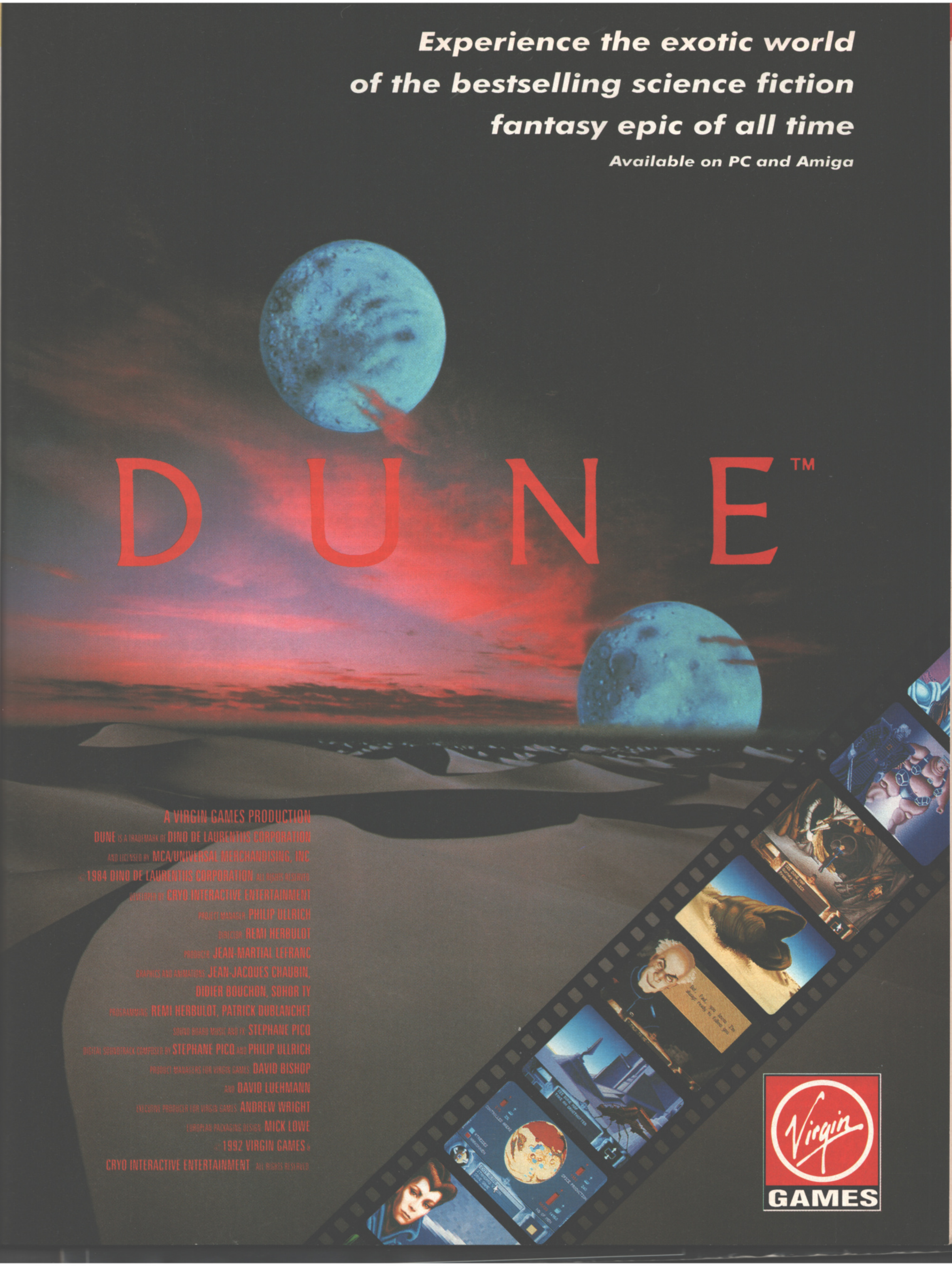

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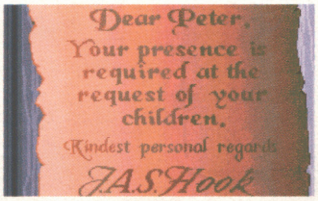
Virgin
GAMES

Across the top here we can see that intro animation in full. Peter comes home...



Dear Peter,
Your presence is required at the request of your children.
Kindest personal regards
J.A.S. Hook

...and discovers his children have gone. All that remains is this challenge...

...from Captain Hook! Tinkerbell arrives and tries to remind Peter of who he is...

...fails, but uses some fairy dust to whisk him off to Never Neverland anyway.

Game: Hook
Publisher: Ocean
Price: £25.99
Authors: Bob Earl (programming),
Kevin Oxland (graphics),
Dean Evans (sound)
Release: Out now

HOOK

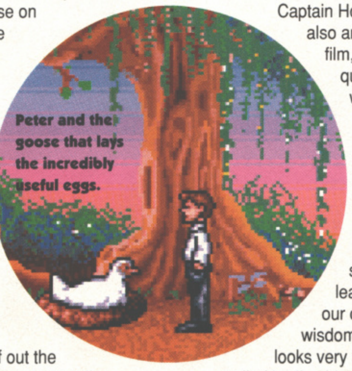
Ocean seem to be raiding a different style of game every time they do

Hook, hook, hook-ability, that's the beauty of this game. Or at least, it is in theory. Ocean seem to be going for a completely different game design every time they convert a film property these days, and you've probably all heard the *Monkey Island* comparisons about this one several thousand times already. I won't say anything else on the matter for the time being, then, but prepare yourself for a few Lucasfilm references later on in this review, because they really are valid. Not only that – they give me a good reference point for explaining just where *Hook* is coming from, and where it's going.

Background guff out the way first though – many of you will have seen Hook the movie, and I guess most of you would agree it was a fairly typical piece of Spielberg schmaltz. Though undeniably rather fun, I found it a little shallow and unwilling to really stretch itself, despite the presence of such class acts as Robin Williams as Peter Pan and Dustin Hoffman as the ubiquitous Captain Hook himself. It was also an all-action type of film, which made it quite a surprise when we heard that Ocean were intending to put together a pseudo adventure for their conversion, rather than some sort of platform leaparound. We had our doubts about the wisdom of this, but it looks very much like they've pulled it off – this is one game that manages to follow the plot and, indeed, the visual style of the original (but without giving those who've seen the movie an unfair advantage) while, at the same time, working exceptionally well as a game.

Load up the game then, and the first thing that strikes you is one of those neat animated intros which everybody loves using to fill up disk space. It looks nice, and it fills in the story for those who haven't seen the movie, but the really interesting stuff comes when the game itself starts, dropping the player into a *Monkey Island*-style graphic adventure, complete with character interaction, multiple choice conversations and a similar piratical theme. Hell, there are even the underwater scenes you got in *Monkey Island* in here!

Anyway, back to the plot. The grown up Peter Pan – now called Peter Banning (so grown-up, grouchy and yuppie-fied that he doesn't believe he really *is* Peter Pan) – stands bewildered in the pirate village in Never Neverland. A glowing, shimmering light flits around overhead – this is the ever-present Tinkerbell, who's always good for a laugh or a snog (in the movie anyway). Movement is simply a matter of clicking the mouse cursor on an area of the screen – Peter will find his own way there – a la *Monkey Island.* Using the icons below the main screen, Peter can talk to people, pick up objects, use objects (or combinations of objects), and give them to others. Communication is simply a matter of clicking on the talk icon, chosing a character, then using the right mouse button to cycle through a list of possible phrases. These are all context-sensitive, just as they are in *Monkey Island.* Initially



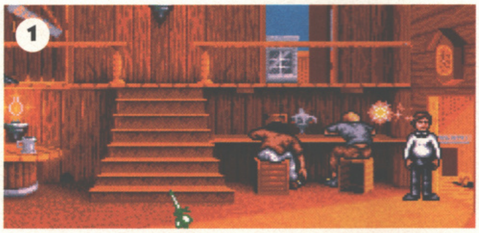
Peter and the goose that lays the incredibly useful eggs.

> **"More suited to the younger adventurer"**

WITHERING FLIGHTS

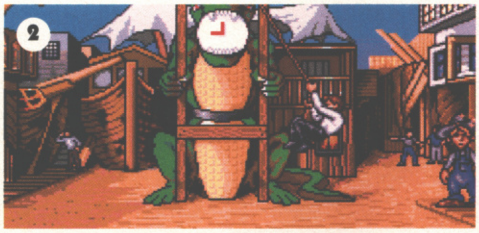
Before Peter stands a chance of recovering his children from the clutches of Captain Hook, he's got to solve problems of epic proportions, find the Lost Boys, remember that he really is Peter Pan (and not some old yuppie called Peter Banning), and learn to fly again. Quite a lot to do, then, but your problems start a lot easier. Task number one, for instance, is simply to get accepted as a dirty, rotten member of pirate society.

A pirate uniform is obviously needed, but, of course, life, even in fantasy lands, is never that simple. Talk a walk with us, as Peter makes his way through the scum-infested pirate town, grabbing bits of choice clothing as he goes. (In the movie Peter had no problem getting hold of a pirate uniform, so even player's who've seen the film have to use their imagination and ingenuity here.) Remember, just think happy thoughts...



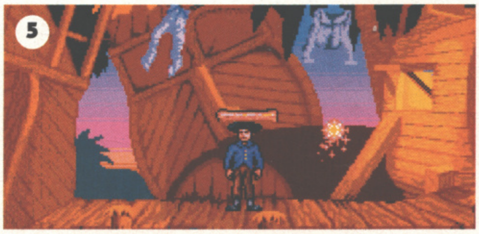
1

The pub's a useful place to visit, but if you get no luck here, try chatting to Tink, who flies around your head. She can be useful...



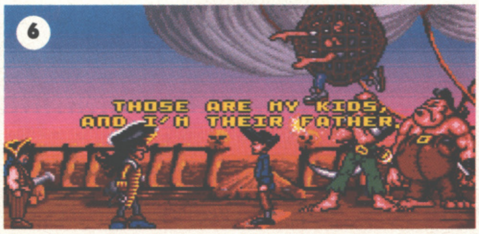
2

The main square, and Peter really gets into the 'swing' of this piracy lark. He's actually trying to get a pirate hat here.



5

Occasionally the game gets very cartoony in style. Here Peter snaps closed a roller blind, and it leaves him in pirate mode.

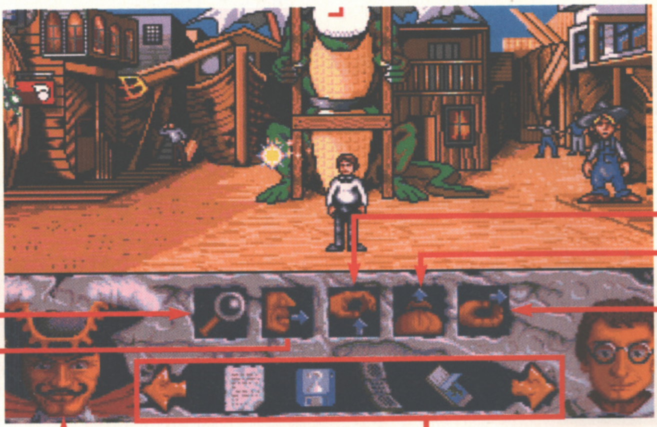


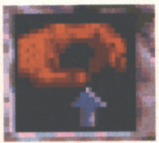
6

Peter gets all uppity with Hook, but to no avail. The Captain wants a fight with the real Pan, not this yuppie he sees instead.

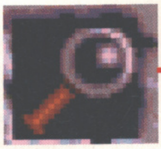
HOOK, LINE (BUT NO STINKER)

Rather than opt for the sort of text-based menu system seen in *The Secret Of Monkey Island*, *Hook* uses icon-based controls. Here we see Peter at the very start of his adventure in Never Neverland. Let's take a look at the icons which give us control over our hero, shall we?

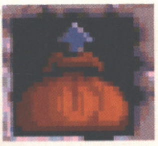




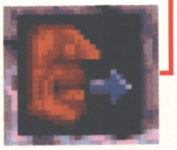
The Take icon – if you can't work out what this one's for, you shouldn't really be playing adventures.



The Magnifying Glass icon – surprisingly enough, this is used to examine objects.



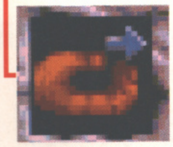
The Use icon – used in conjunction with one or more objects, Peter can manipulate or create things.



The Talk icon – simply click on here, then click on a character to have a chat with him (or her).

This semi-animated piccy of Hook will shake his fist whenever Peter solves a puzzle. Note the pic of Peter over on the other side – when he remembers his Pan identity, his appearance will change.

The Object display. Peter (having hero-sized pockets) can carry as many objects as he wants. The arrows at either side of the display enable the player to scroll through this rather unwieldy list.



The Give icon – used for passing objects to other characters. Very 'handy'. (Ahem.)

a movie licence these days – but they don't stop having hits. Here's *more* proof...

the player finds that nobody will stop for a chat because Peter isn't a pirate, so mission number one is to get yourself a decent pirate's outfit.

AND SO THE FANTASY UNFOLDS

Peter meets the Lost Boys, re-discovers his old tree hideout, and... but wait a minute, I don't want to spoil the story for all you *Hook*-less types out there. Suffice to say that it follows the film pretty well, without making all the puzzles too obvious.

Where *Hook* really scores, however, is in the atmosphere stakes. The sound is particularly is gorgeous. The spot FX – the Lost Boys eating, the crickets cricketing – are ace, and although the music used isn't the same as the soundtrack we heard in the movie, it's damned effective, recalling the epic, emotional, and lighthearted moments of the movie surprisingly, and equally, well. The way *Hook* shakes his, um, hook in anger whenever a puzzle is successfully solved is also pretty cool.

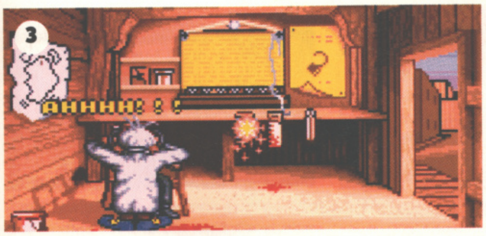
Puzzle-wise, however, *Hook* is occasionally a little predictable, sometimes a bit on the obtuse side, and just a tad too linear. It's very rigidly structured, with the solution of one problem leading into the next all too surely. It's just too limiting and organised, particularly given *Hook*'s diminutive size – and no, I'm not making a Dustin Hoffman joke there, just pointing out that the game is rather small. What's there is nice, if only there was more of it.

And that just about rounds off what I want to say about it all really – I think I'll let the pictures do the rest of the talking. I must confess to going to the movie Hook deliberately *not* wanting to like it – quite perverse, I know – and I wasn't exactly looking forward to the version game either. It's nice to be proved wrong sometimes, isn't it?

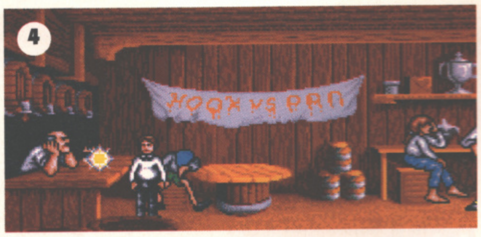
The conclusion, then. Where *Hook* falls down, it's mainly though the subject matter. As I said before, the movie was somewhat shallow and lacking in plot, and the result is that *Hook* the game is short on humour – and short in length too. Although Ocean claim that their game has almost exactly the same number of locations as the first *Monkey Island*, I'm not convinced. And even if it has, it was the convoluted – and rib-achingly funny – storylines of the *Monkey Island* games which make them such winners.

In some ways it's not fair to compare the game to Lucasfilm's masterwork, I know – even if, with the pirate locations and very similar presentation, Ocean are rather begging the comparison. Let us instead treat it in its own right, in which case it's fun, it's slick and it stays true to it's subject matter (as true as the film did anyway). More suited to the younger adventurer, maybe, but it's another success for Ocean. Keep it up, guys.

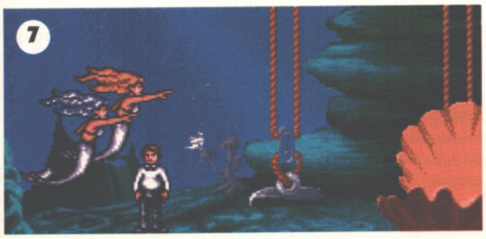
● ***MARK RAMSHAW***



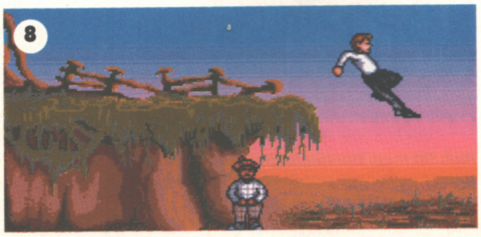
Now you won't find this scene in the movie at all, but giving your gold teeth to the dentist(!) is a handy way to make a fast buck.



A few mugs of 'cocoa' later and one of the bar regulars is fast asleep, but – hey! – he didn't suit those pirate trousers anyway.



As with the movie, *Hook* features a gratuitous underwater sequence. Make sure Peter examines the huge conch shell...



Here's Peter before he turns back into Peter Pan. He still can't fly at this stage, which means he's a long way to go to beat Hook.

▲ **UPPERS** Beautiful sound, relevant plot, nice shiny-smooth graphics, and lashings of creamy goodness. The story of the film Hook – which is Peter Pan, presented Spielberg style – is captured perfectly.

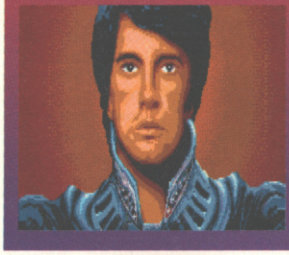
▼ **DOWNERS** Despite the look, this is a much shallower game than Lucasfilm's. There isn't really all that much to it, and some of the trite sentiments expressed (a carry over from the film) might grate a bit.

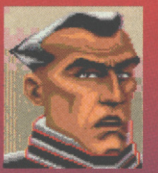
THE BOTTOM LINE

Small, perhaps, but still jolly nicely formed. I guess I'm just an old softie at heart (that's what all the other reviewers say, anyway) but I'll give it... **84** PERCENT

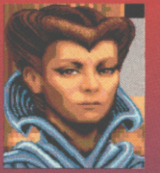
DUNE KNOW WHO'S WHO?

You play FBI Agent Cooper, cherry pie-eating – oh, I'm sorry, I mean Paul Artreides, son of the Duke Leto of the House of Artreides (it's just that they're both played by the same actor, which explains my confusion.) Don't worry about his long and complicated name though – this isn't Lord of Rings, and "Hi, my name's Paul" will usually do fine. Your mission is to rid Arakis of those nasty Harkonnen types and make the planet all green and lovely while turning yourself into a demi-god at the same time. (Hang on a minute though – are you sure it isn't David Icke we're talking about here?)

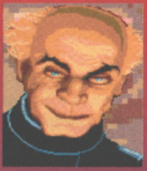




This is your Dad, the Duke Leto. He's just been sent to Arakis by the Emperor to mine Spice. He's a bit of an old fogey who looks, and acts, like Jessica has starched his uniform using quick-drying cement – his main role in life is to whinge on about Harkonnens and rush off on futile battles all over the place.



Here's mummy. Aren't you lucky to have someone that looks like Francesca Annis as yer mum? Jessica, for that is her name, is one of the Bene Gesserit – these are a chapter of powerful psychic nuns (or, at least, they're something like that). Her main role in the game is to be as irritatingly cryptic as possible.



Gurney Halleck is a lot more helpful – in fact, keep asking him for advice in the first part of the game, otherwise you're not going to get very far. He's a military expert – he trained you and will help forge the Fremen (we'll explain who they are in a bit) into a fighting force. Main role: to fill you in on the plot.

Game: Dune
Publisher: Virgin
Price: £30.99
Authors: R Herbulot (designer and programmer), P Dublanchet (programmer), JJ Chaubin, D Bouchon, S Ty (graphics and animators) and others, all at Cryo Interactive Entertainment
Release: Out now

DUNE

It's the rare film licence that comes out at exactly the same

One thing's for sure. You can't really accuse Virgin of trying to cash in on the success of the film here, and for two very good reasons. For one thing, the movie wasn't exactly successful (critically or financially), and for another thing it came out about eight years ago. (Even by film conversion standards, which hardly ever make it out in time to tie-in with the movie, that's pretty late...)

No, you're best off thinking of this more as a game of the phenomenally successful book, then – one which just happens to make use of much of the look of the film. Think of it also as being different to most film tie-ins in that it's actually rather good.

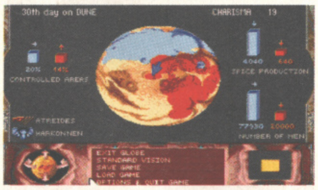
Let's concentrate on the visual side first though, as it's rather interesting. As you can probably see from the screenshots, the faces in the game look just like the characters from the film – somehow programmers Cryo have persuaded Kyle McLachlan (more famous now for Twin Peaks) and Francesca Annis (more famous now for, um... well, Mark thinks she's pretty good) to let them use their fizogs. And a damned fine job the artists have done too.

A lot of the 'look' of the hardware in the game also borrows heavily from designs seen in the film, though they're not direct copies. Still, it gives the game a very professional, designy look – and when you think of how little a game like *Total Recall* really looked like the film, this has to be seen as a real achievement. Other details of the visual side of things will become clearer as we go through the game – for now, let's just say it's very good looking indeed.

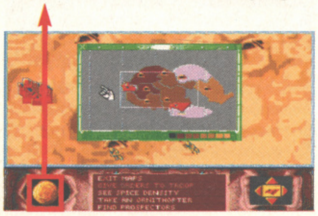
The game is, of course, basically an graphic adventure, but one with liberal dollops of strategy thrown in. I'd normally at this point say the plot'll be familiar to anyone who's seen the film – except that anyone who's familiar with the film (or, indeed, read the book) will tell you there's nothing the slightest bit basic about it.

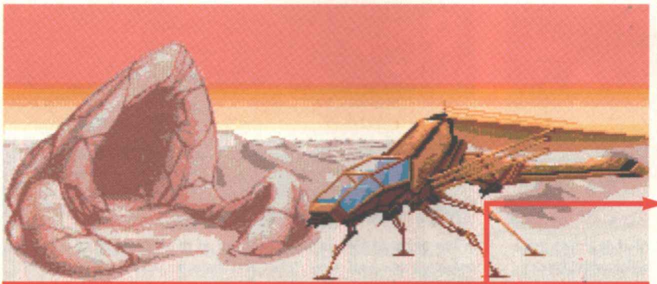
Certainly, eight years ago most audiences were leaving the cinema totally bewildered, and things haven't become any clearer on repeated TV viewings – so much so that the programmers here have actually done their best to simplify things so as not to lose their audience right away. Having said that, while this new version of

DUNE ROAMIN': USING YOUR CONTROL PANEL TO SPICE THINGS UP AND MAKE THE THE PLANET GREEN



Click on the globe to get a status report on how your affairs on Arakis are going.

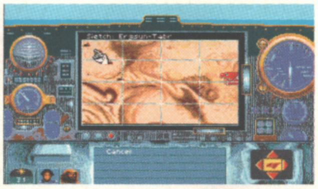




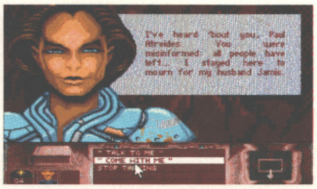
From the maps you can check to see how the Spice mining is going, where your troops are and, later on (when you gain psychic powers) give them orders from afar.

Click the cursor on any of the icons or commands in the panel at the bottom here to access your options.

Clicking on these arrows moves you around when you're on foot.



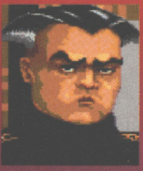
Talking to characters is a bit limited. You only usually have two or three options to go for, and choosing the wrong one rarely proves to be disastrous.



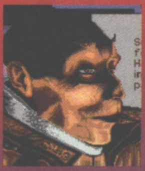
I've heard 'bout you, Paul Atreides. You were misinformed: all people have left... I stayed here to mourn for my husband Jamis.

" TALK TO ME "
" COME WITH ME "
STOP TALKING

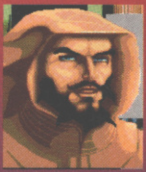
Choose TAKE AN ORNITHOPTER and you can use these bug-like craft to fly around the planet. You set your destination by clicking on a map.



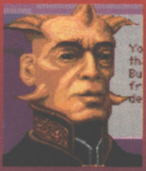
Look out, Stuart Campbell – this dude has an even meaner haircut than you! He's Duncan Idaho, a family friend of the Artreides who keeps an eye on the Spice stocks. A bit of a coward, but he knows all there is to know about Spice production, and can help work out how many Fremen you can spare for military training.



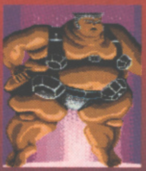
Thufir Hawat is the family Mentat, or strategist, who, for some strange reason or other, hangs around in the communications room a lot looking spooky (and not doing much else). Check out his advice once you have started training Fremen for fighting though, as he tends to drop useful hints about their readiness.



Stilgar is the leader of the Fremen. Once you make contact with him, the Fremen will follow you slavishly – like you were promising them all nights of passion with Jessica or something. (In fact, Stilgar *does* seem keen on meeting your ma.) Having said that, he's a bit of a old woman, always nagging you about what you should be doing.



The Emperor – for this is he – keeps sending you messages asking for more Spice, so make sure you have enough of it – if you miss a shipment you could find yourself visited by his troops, the Saudaukar, and you don't want that. Oh yes, and there's something he's not telling you at the beginning too...



Know your enemy. This is Baron Harkonnen. Bit of a fat bast, isn't he? In fact he needs anti-gravity plates to help keep him upright! The Harkonnen clan are on Arakis before you get there, but they're a rotten bunch who can't offer the Fremen Francesca Annis, so they need to be booted right off the planet.

time as the movie, but few are this late. Still, it looks like the game's well worth the wait...

the plot at least has a linear development *(This is beginning to sound like The Late Show... – Ed.)*, it still doesn't make a massive amount of sense. Still, what the heck, eh? It's still better than the usual cliché-ridden Lord Of The Rings rehash.

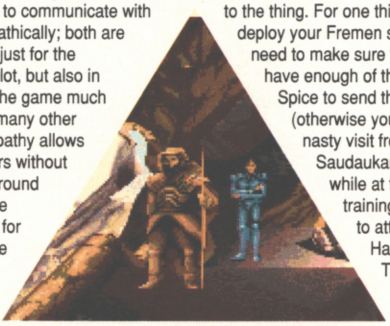
Here, then, is the basic story – or the best I can do anyway. The Emperor has sent the Artreides family (of which you, Paul, are a member) to the desert planet Arakis, also known as Dune, to mine Spice – the most valuable thing in the galaxy, as it prolongs life. Unfortunately, the Harkonnens, your family's long-time enemies, are already on Arakis and mining away merrily. This causes problems for you obviously, as does the fact that Dune's local inhabitants, the Fremen, are on the lookout for an outsider who they'll worship as their new god and who'll make the planet lush with vegetation – and the reckon it's you!

Your mum, a psychic nun, seems to confirm this too – she's trained you in the secret ways of her Bene Gesserit sect, and believes that your being near to so much Spice will awaken great powers within you. And thus the scene is set. There's a lot to take on board, but as the game develops, more and more of it starts to make some sort of sense – and anyway, so long as you know what your immediate game task is, understanding the overall picture can probably wait.

That's the set up then – the story itself is divided into three main sections. When you first arrive on Arakis you have to make contact with the Fremen and get them mining for you. (This is necessary to keep the Emperor off your back – he keeps sending messages demanding Spice.) Next up you have to train the Fremen into armies to attack the Harkonnens. Finally you have to make contact with a fabled ecologist called Kynes, who will reveal the secret of turning Dune into a tropical paradise.

> **"Different to most tie-ins in that it's rather good"**

Throughout the game, your character, Paul, gains in power. For instance, he starts having visions and begins to be able to communicate with the Fremen telepathically; both are pretty handy, not just for the purposes of the plot, but also in terms of making the game much less hassle than many other adventures. Telepathy allows you to issue orders without having to zoom around the planet to make personal contact, for instance, while the visions neatly save you from missing out on any vital plot developments (although the umpteenth reminder from the palace to send the Emperor his Spice can get a mite tedious).



Partly because of the introduction of these handy dandy superpowers, the game's control system is wonderfully intuitive. You hardly have to refer to the manual at all, which is the way things should be. Just a few clicks on the icon bar at the bottom of the screen are all you need to issue orders, move around the planet, talk to people and so on. There is no typing; when you want to indulge in meaningful conversation you just highlight the character you want to talk to, then a selection of likely things you might want to say pops up. You simply choose the one you want. (This is both good and bad, of course: while you're unlikely to miss out on important facts because you don't know the correct question to ask, equally it's almost impossible not to ask the right questions, and thus plough right through the game.)

Don't worry though – *Dune* never becomes simply an interactive storybook, rather than a game, as tends to happen to graphic adventures. The main reason is that the strategy elements inject an extra, and much less black and white, dimension to the thing. For one thing, you have to deploy your Fremen sensibly – you need to make sure that you always have enough of them producing Spice to send the Emperor (otherwise you'll get a rather nasty visit from his Saudaukar storm troops) while at the same time be training plenty of them to attack the Harkonnens.

There's equipment to find, various way to speed up Spice production to uncover, ways to improve Fremen military training to suss out, giant sandworms (who tend to chew up vital equipment) to avoid and so on – there's a lot to try and sort out as best you can.

Inevitably, however, there are faults with the game. Battles, for instance, are simply a case of indicating which troops you want to attack which area, then sitting back and waiting for a vision to tell you how things have gone – they could be more exciting.

SAND IN THE PLACE WHERE YOU ARE

The maps could be a bit more helpful too. It would be nice to have one which tells you how things are going at each 'seitch' (the Fremen's name for their settlements) at a click too (though having said that, a comparable ability does become available when Paul gains his psychic powers).

The main problem, however, is that the game's all a bit leisurely, and you rarely feel under any kind of pressure. The plot developments are virtually handed to you on a plate, and a lot of the characters act as mere cyphers to push things along. It would be much better if there were a few more options available to you. (Also, some of the humour is pretty cringe-inducing – being told that 'Jessica really does have some amazing faculties,' is fairly typical – but that's really a very minor point.)

When all's said and done though, I enjoyed *Dune* a lot. As I've said, the graphics are superb, with excellently drawn characters, detailed backgrounds and clearly laid-out control bars. The animation sequences are also top notch – some of the ornithopter flying sequences could almost be described as beautiful – and the plot is fascinating. A very polished game then, and one which should appeal to fans of the book, graphic adventure lovers and general gamer's alike.

● ***DAVE GOLDER***

UPPERS It looks great, the control system is straightforward, the plot is original (for an adventure game, that is – I know its been swiped from a book, smart alec) and engrossing and it features a digitised Francesca Annis. *(Are you sure that's really an important plus point? – Ed.)*

DOWNERS Issuing some of the commands could be easier, while all the seitches ('towns', remember?) you visit look the same – which, besides being confusing, is also downright dull. Worst of all, though, there's never any real feeling of being threatened; it's all a bit too comfy for, well, comfort.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Not so much a simple adventure as a strategy game-cum-animated-book, this should appeal to adventure fans and gamers not usually into the genre – and, indeed, non-game-playing fans of the book – alike. I enjoyed it – this is one of the few games where you actually find yourself caring about some of the characters!

81 PERCENT

TV SPORTS BASEBALL

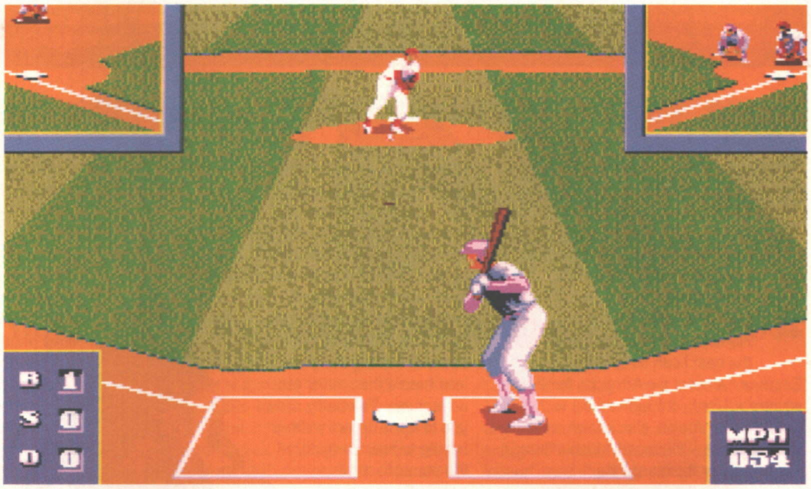
Cinemaware's acclaimed TV Sports series returns, this time under the Mindscape label. First up to bat (ahem) is this long-awaited baseball simulation.

Publisher: Mindscape
Price: £25.99
Authors: Cinemaware
Release: Out now

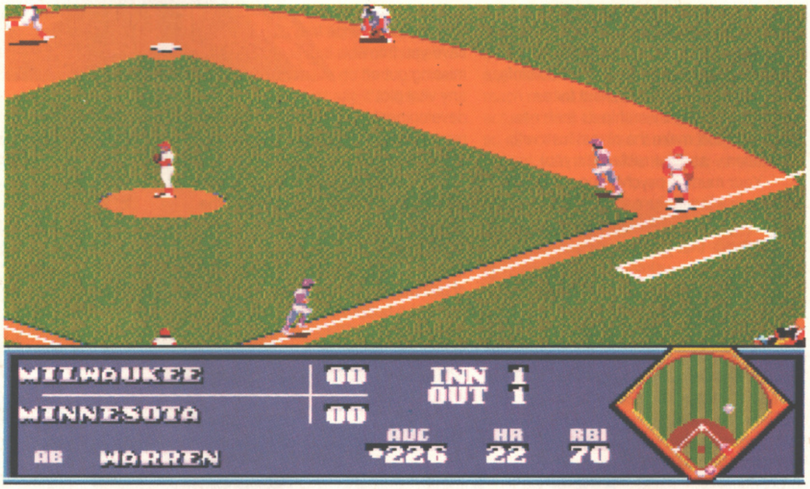
Almost a year ago, *RBI Two Baseball* arrived on the Amiga scene to mixed reactions. It wasn't that the game wasn't up to scratch. Everyone agreed that it covered the sport of baseball fairly comprehensively and was on the whole (ignoring a few gameplay niggles) a thoroughly professional and well produced package.

The problem was with the sport itself. Don't get me wrong, no one was of the opinion that baseball was the pitiful C5 of sports, but there was a strong tide of feeling that the game simply isn't suited to a home computer. The people who felt this most strongly argued that the thrill of baseball is in getting out in the fresh air, having a slog with your mates in the summertime and generally – well, getting physical. Playing baseball on the computer is like trying to fly a computerised kite – a pale, shadow of the real thing that totally misses the point of doing it.

> **"Only to be recommended to the die hard fan"**



The crowd are hushed as the batter gives his whole team a high five, pats some chalk dust on his hands, swaps gum with the stick boy, salutes his mom, kisses the sacred picture of Abraham Lincoln, jumps up, turns around and then discovers he's wandered into a mambo convention by mistake. *(Neil, you're fired – Ed.)*



Hey, you don't get rid of me that easily. A successful hit has given the team a chance to work their way round the bases. The batsman sprints to first base, while the previous guy starts to make a desperate run for the next one.

SWINGING SPORT OR BASE BORE?

On the other hand though, there were those baseball afficienados who waved two fingers at such poncy theologists and thoroughly enjoyed playing *RBI Two Baseball* on their Amiga all the same. OK, so this is all ancient history, but the arguments have resurfaced with the emergence *TV Sports Baseball* from Mindscape.

Now it must be said at this point that I find baseball great fun to play in the park, but find the thought of slugging out a long season at home a tad daunting – and not just a little boring. Sorry, but there you go.

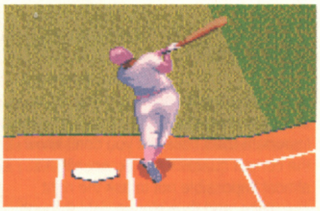
Having said that, however, I was pretty impressed with the range of options, choices and decisions that you're given here. That they're so extensive isn't so surprising, however, when you realise that you're in fact lumbered with not only the coach's job, but also those of batter, pitcher and fielder. In fact it would seem that the only job you don't get to have a go at is selling the hot dogs to the crowd at half time – sorry, in between each of the nine innings.

So assuming all of us know roughly what baseball is all about, let's take a look at what you actually get to do under the guises of your four different roles.

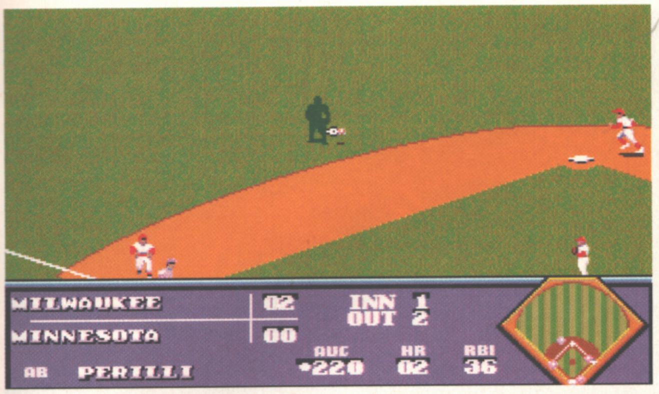
Well, firstly (as coach) you have to decide what sort of game you're going to play. Set up a one-off tournament match

GOOD AFTERNOON. THIS IS

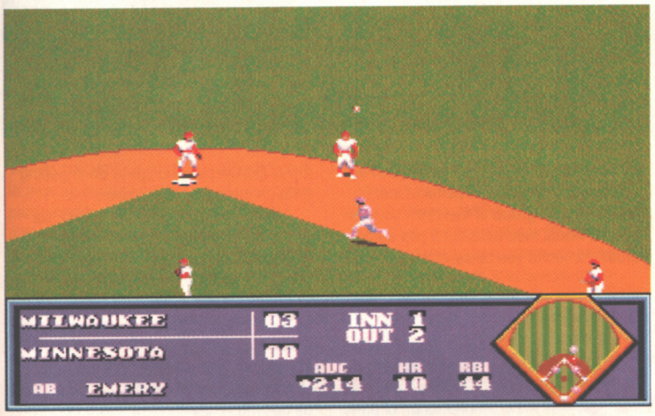
Greetings sports fans. You join us at the Colosseum for some first rate baseball.



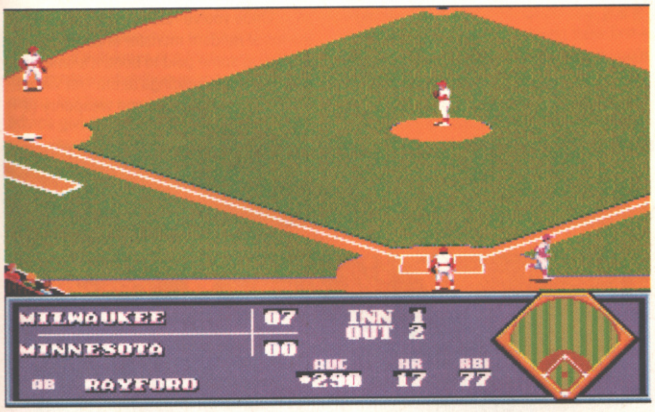
Thwack! Let's take a closer look at those fluid batting graphics, why don't we?



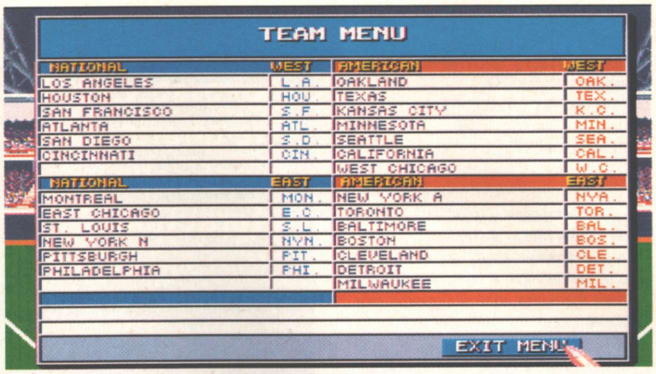
He ran nimbly past first base and was just on his way to second when he realised that he'd forgotten to Artex™ the shed. *(What sort of caption is that, West? – Ed.)*



One of the most obvious dangers inherent in a game of baseball is being hit by a hard round object travelling at 90 mph. That, and this game's crap organ music, that is.



The swines! They can't do that, can they? Or can they? I dunno – Milwaukee have hit a home run, and all their little men are legging it back to the team's dug out. Get me the rule book right now! Oh yes, and a peanut butter and jelly sandwich while you're there.


TEAM MENU

NATIONAL	WEST	AMERICAN	WEST
LOS ANGELES	L.A.	OAKLAND	OAK.
HOUSTON	HOU.	TEXAS	TEX.
SAN FRANCISCO	S.F.	KANSAS CITY	K.C.
ATLANTA	ATL.	MINNESOTA	MIN.
SAN DIEGO	S.D.	SEATTLE	SEA.
CINCINNATI	CIN.	CALIFORNIA	CAL.
		WEST CHICAGO	W.C.
NATIONAL	EAST	AMERICAN	EAST
MONTREAL	MON.	NEW YORK A	NYA.
EAST CHICAGO	E.C.	TORONTO	TOR.
ST. LOUIS	S.L.	BALTIMORE	BAL.
NEW YORK N	NYN.	BOSTON	BOS.
PITTSBURGH	PIT.	CLEVELAND	CLE.
PHILADELPHIA	PHI.	DETROIT	DET.
		MILWAUKEE	MIL.

Clash of the titans? Not! Minnesota might by the 1991 champions, but Milwaukee aren't exactly going to offer a humungous challenge. If you lose this, you're a real 'chump'.

or enter the league and win the championships, it's up to you. Nothing too taxing there really.

But as head coach it's also your job to pick your team from the squad available to you and then work out the batting and pitching order. Each player has his own stats evaluating skill, stamina and particular abilities, and using these you must select your ball-breaking team. Some teams are better than others, but with 26 of them to chose from you should be able to pick a fairly useful bunch of jocks.

However good they are, though, players tire quickly when playing, so the rigours of team selection boil down to striking a balance between skill and stamina.

Into the game itself, and as soon as play starts you slap on your cap and climb the pitcher's mound with a hardball in your hand. It's your aim to throw a fair ball past the batter without him hitting it, and to do that three times. There's only one fly in the ointment – the computerised batsmen are really quite good, dammit. Luckily, in two-player mode the opposition is slightly less on the ball (my little joke there) and pitching heroics are rather more likely. You can throw fast balls, slow balls and bendy balls – they're all just a couple of button taps away.

When (and I mean when, not if – at least in the one player game) the batter connects, you become the fielder nearest the ball's estimated destination. A dot on the pitch indicates where the ball will land, and you must try and get there before the ball does. If you're successful, you'll make the catch and the crowd will go wild. If the ball hits the ground, however, you must pick it up and lob it to whichever base has got a batter running to it. If the ball gets to the base before the batter, he's out. There's not much skill involved, and really everything's decided the second ball makes hits with bat.

> "Some think the game isn't suited to a computer"

Eventually (depending how good your pitching was) it will be your turn to bat. You swagger onto the diamond (in the guise of whoever it was you chose to be your opening batsman) and attempt to slug each pitch out of the ball park. You can bunt (tap) or slug the ball, but getting used to the timing is difficult. The direction, height and strength of the swipe is seemingly completely random, so really you've just got to hope that your Amiga's feeling generous. Running between bases is automatic, but you can sneak bases.

And so it goes. After three batsmen are out, it's time to pitch again. Then bat again. Then pitch again. Then bat again. Then – well, you get the picture.

So what did I make of it all? Well, the two player mode *TV Sports Baseball* is lots of fun, in a beered-up, after the pubs shut, with your mates, kinda way. However, the fact has to be faced that in one player mode this game seriously drags. Monotonous is the word. Really.

So, back to the the argument at the beginning of this review, and you could quite easily say that this dullness isn't really the game's fault, more that of computerised baseball as a whole. Or at least, you could if it wasn't the case that *RBI Two Baseball* offered slightly more excitement, including comedy scoreboards and natty jingles to accompany the action – superficial novelties maybe, but they sure helped jolly the game along. In *RBI Two Baseball* the gameplay itself was also more varied, offering more hands-on excitement – it has to be seen as the better of the pair.

MILWAUKEE 07
MINNESOTA 00
INN 1
OUT 2
AB PRICE
AVG .240
HR 07
RBI 60

Dear me, it's all gone horribly wrong. Milwaukee are miles ahead and still that old bag insists on playing duff Hammond organ music. (Where's Val Doonican when you really need him?)

Which all leaves *TV Sports Baseball* a bit lost really. It's a competent but ultimately tedious game that really can only be recommended to die hard baseball nuts who fancy wallowing in a whole season's worth of stats, player rosters and limited action. In short, baseball should be confined to the park. There, I've said it.

● ***NEIL WEST***

▲ **UPPERS** Fairly competently put together, and, since there really only are two decent baseball games on the Amiga (and this is one of them) you could do a lot worse than buy this...

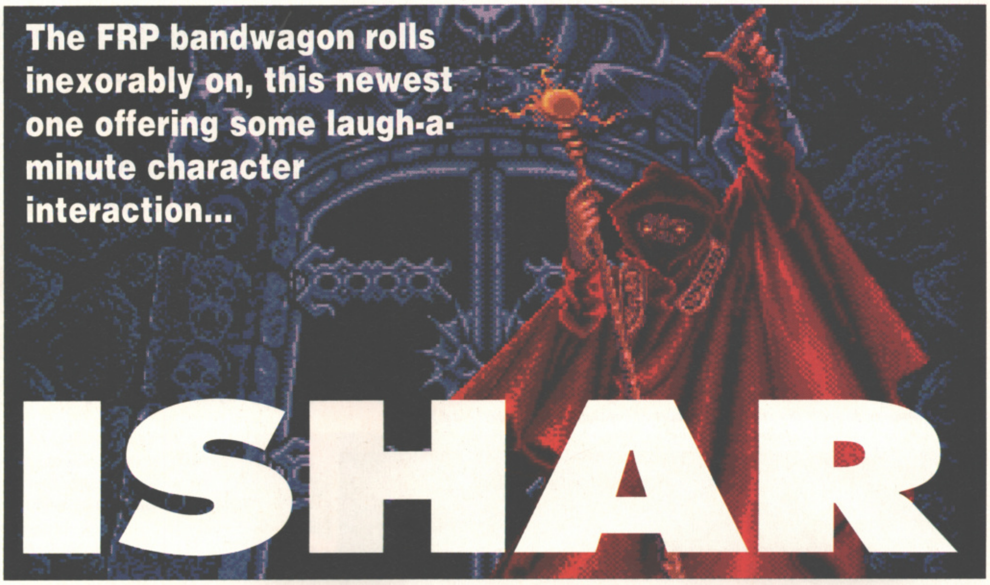
▼ **DOWNERS** However, baseball can get very tedious on the Amiga (especially in one player mode) and, all told, chief rival *RBI Two Baseball* is really the better game.

THE BOTTOM LINE

It's all very well put together – and all very tedious after an hour or so. If you're seriously into the sport and have a like-minded buddy, then, er, buy *RBI Two Baseball* instead.

52 PERCENT

Game: Ishar – Legend Of The Fortress
Publisher: Silmarils
Price: £29.99
Authors: Michel Pernod & Pascal Einsweiler
Release: Out now



The FRP bandwagon rolls inexorably on, this newest one offering some laugh-a-minute character interaction...

ISHAR

The forces of evil and darkness never seem to sit still for long. Last month we had a bunch of merry adventurers slugging it out in SSI's *Eye of the Beholder II*, while over in sunny Trazere there was another ripping tussle under way courtesy of Mindscape's excellent *Legend*.

Now there's *Ishar*, which brings us yet another chance to go a-wandering in a land ridden with evil creatures, liberally peppered with treasure and stuffed to the gunnels with RPG-style silly names. The interface is in the *EOTB* mould; a first-person perspective viewscreen, you have to click on arrows for movement, and sub-screens are used for stats, inventories and certain actions. It differs from *EOTB* in that the wilderness-based parts of the adventure play a more significant role, and differs from a good many other RPGs in that the first-person view is retained when in the great outdoors.

THE LOST GENERATION OF HEROES

And so to the plot. A chap called Krogh has built a temple called Ishar in the land of Kendoria and is intent on making life thoroughly unpleasant for all your Kendorian kinsfolk. It's your job to find the temple and have a few stiff words with Krogh – or bosh him one if he's not prepared to listen to reason. There are several ways to win, most of which entail scooting about the country trying to build your party up, equip them with the huge variety of weaponry and armour you'll find is available, and bump up their magic-using capability wherever piossible, more of which later.

Character generation is very simple – there isn't any. You start with a fighter chappie and must recruit extra party members as you go along. A total of 30 potential recruits – including rangers, paladins, monks, clerics, wizards and the like – are dotted about the game world, so there's no shortage of choice, but there are some added complexities.

For a start, this RPG breaks with tradition and offers – wait for it – five characters! Yes, five. That's four plus one for those of you labouring under the apprehension that all good adventuring parties come in fours. It's a fairly fluid group of five too – you can boot individual members out if you come across someone you fancy more (but see 'Just one big happy family' box below), and you can replace those killed in action. Then we've got the interaction of party members to consider. New members must be voted in, existing members may have arguments with each other, there's even the potential for internecine bloodletting if disagreements go too far. As if you didn't have enough to do in getting through the adventure proper.

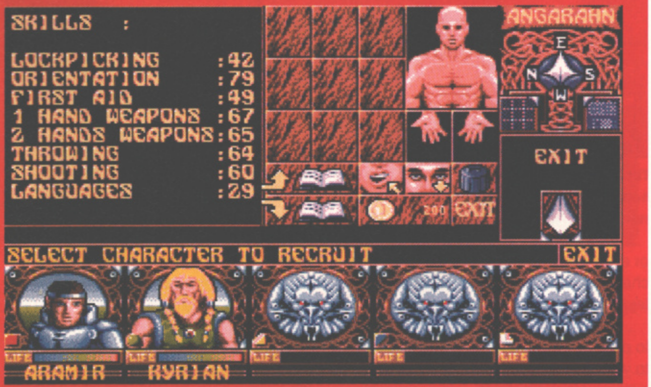
> **"Character generation is very simple – there isn't any"**

Setting out, the first thing that hits you is the graphics. The landscape is gloriously realistic, as is the effect of distance – buildings show as hazy outlines when they're fan away, and are realised in glorious detail close up. Even the trees, grass and rivers look realistic, which all adds to the game's atmosphere. Unfortunately, the monsters leave a little to be desired. They jerk towards you, a là *EOTB*, and do the usual two or three-frame stutter-swipe swordplay that adds so little to combat encounters.

Once you've hacked your way past the initial random monster encounter, and picked up some gold to boot, it's time to pop into a few buildings at the first village. Here you can buy food and weaponry (if

JUST ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY – NOT!

One of the most original things about *Ishar* is the way the party members relate to each other. When recruiting, existing members will vote on whether the newie should be allowed to join. Factors such as race and alignment (good or evil) will sway them, so it's not always a dead cert that your paladins will welcome the psychotic orc you're keen to hang out with. You could find yourself unable to recruit potentially useful characters.



SKILLS :

LOCKPICKING :42
ORIENTATION :79
FIRST AID :49
1 HAND WEAPONS :67
2 HANDS WEAPONS :65
THROWING :64
SHOOTING :60
LANGUAGES :29

New personalities bring new skills and personal foibles. It's called attitude, y'know.

That's not all though. Even if you do get someone past the entry committee, often as not they'll behave like a schmuck.

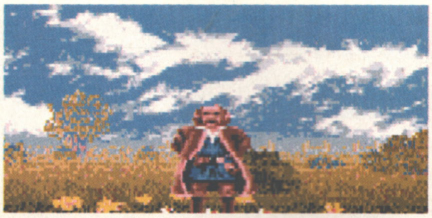
One cantankerous dwarf, for instance, will refuse point blank to give first aid to certain party members – if this winds you up, you can always try to get him booted, though he may have made other friends in the party who will object.

Get him assassinated? You could try that too, but his mates are unlikely to take kindly to it, and you could easily get embroiled in a lot of pointless in-fighting. Similarly, other new party members could easily prove divisive in other ways – one female you'll meet forms seemingly random romantic attachments with members of your party!

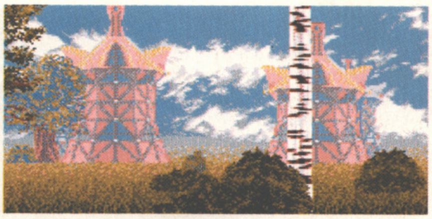
So what's the point? Well, it's kinda fun, and adds a dimension not normally seen in FRPs, but (more importantly) this is, I believe, the first time a computer game has ever managed to adequately capture the sort of mindless hostility which so many paper-and-die role players routinely engage in when there's a dispute about the rules. (And if you've ever played D&D, you'll know there can be a lot of disputes about the rules.) Anyway, if you think you might enjoy that sort of bickering, you'll probably quite like this.

MAKING FRIENDS IS EASY...

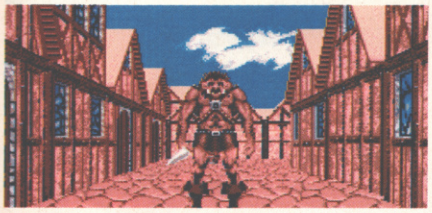
There are numerous encounters awaiting your band of brave adventurers; some folk you'll meet can be useful, while others take an immediate dislike to the concept of your continued existence. It's usually fairly plain how an encounter will turn out – if a text box comes up, then you're generally okay. If, however, a red splodge with a number in it appears over an adventurer's face, then you're generally going to have to hack your way out. Here're a few sights you'll come across in the game...



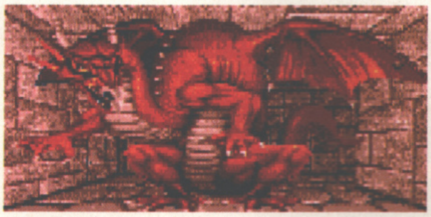
The first bod you'll encounter points you in the right direction, but volunteers little else. You could try beating information out of him, but that would be churlish.



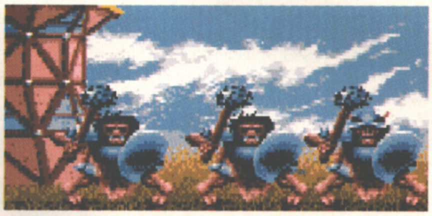
Striding heroically across the veldt, we come upon a village. Quick, let's hide behind that silver birch before we're asked to register for the community charge...



Life in the big city is no bed of roses. Mindless thugs roam the streets intent on causing trouble, like this geezer here, who'd sooner bop you one than stop for a chat.



Oh look, it's a dragon. And if I'm not very much mistaken, he's taken to hanging out in a dungeon. There's something very familiar about all this...



Here we see the natives engaged in a fascinating tribal dance ritual. No, sorry, it's a bunch of orcs – and they want to kill us! Some things never change, eh?

you've got enough dosh), go to the tavern to pick up useful gossip, recruit your first party member, train to up your strength (rather expensive this one) and get a hint from a wise old man as to your next move.

There are many such encounters in the game, giving a certain linearity to the plot, but you could feasibly go meandering for days in your own sweet way.

YOU'LL WA-WA-WA-WA WANDER

Unfortunately, it's all too easy to end up wandering for days even if you *do* stick to the storyline – you've got a map to refer to, but it only shows coastlines, rivers and bridges. It's at times like these you'll go to the orientation function on the actions menu, but the advice given on your whereabouts here is pretty vague. Also, the concept of roads seems to be lost on the inhabitants of Kendoria, so don't be surprised to find yourself trudging about for ages when looking for the elusive bridges that provide the only means of getting on in the world.

> **"Breaks with tradition and offers – wait for it – five characters!"**

That said, however, there is a fair amount to do. As your party progresses, it encounters various folk who will either stop to chat, trade, fight or join your posse. Taking on a magic user (either cleric or wizard) means getting to grips with spells, and, as you'd expect, these increase in power and range as experience points are accumulated and characters go up in level. There's also the facility to mix your own potions, the ingredients for which have to be bought at apothecaries along the way. You can mix ingredients (eye of toad, brain of rat and other delicacies) any old way if you're feeling particularly adventurous – they can have odd results if you don't know what you're doing – or, alternatively, you can look out for people bearing specific recipes. Of course, you'll need to find the magical mixing flask first – and there's only one in the game, so you'd better keep your eyes peeled.

The way the magic works is certainly a move in the right direction, combining the standard rote of pre-formulated RPG spells with the more versatile *Legend*-style 'make it up as you go along' approach, though it still doesn't match the sheer spellcasting fun of *Legend*.

In all, then, what we've got here is a game that could probably run a close race with *EOTB* – the graphics are better and the party make-up is more malleable – but it doesn't quite draw you in in the same way. One reason for that is that it's quite frustrating to begin with, as the game gives you no clear idea of your location or how best to get from A to B. I had to start afresh several times after various party-totalling encounters, including a run-in with an invisible wood spirit – damn frustrating getting killed by something you can't even see. (To be fair, there is a 'helm of clear seeing' to help out with this particular to-do, but you've got to find it first.) Also, a combination of the orientation-nobbling first-person view, the lack of auto-mapping and the vagueness of the descriptions given of one's location makes finding anything in this game world some task.

VERILY THE EARTH SHALL SHAKE

What else? Well, the inclusion of character interaction is good – you can even visit a psychiatrist for an assessment of the party's karma! – but it's tricky keeping members alive for long enough to build up any kind of meaningful relationship. This is an interesting and unexpected variation on the way things are usually done, though I can't help thinking it'll make as many enemies as it earns friends.

Briefly, then, there's enough novelty and more than enough daft names in here to keep the RPG buff amused for a fair while, and some damn titanic encounters in the temple of Ishar that will certainly slake the hack-'n'-slash merchant's thirst for virtual murder, but it's no world beater. Quite frankly, there've been an awful lot of impessive RPGs this year, and while this is a worthy addition, it's not an earth shaking one.

● ***KARL FOSTER***

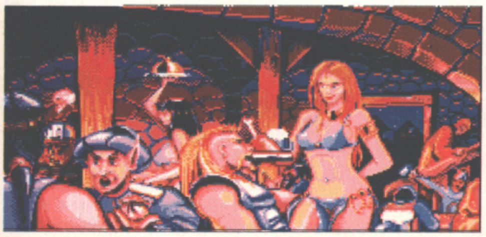
▲ **UPPERS** Great graphics and neat sound effects make this huge game world an atmospheric experience. Many thoughtful and original touches set it apart from the rest of the RPG field – and it's certainly a long way from the same company's earlier *Crystals Of Arborea*, which it in many ways closely resembles.

▼ **DOWNERS** It's tough to get going and far too easy to get lost. You can end up stumbling around for a long time before getting into the real meat of the action.

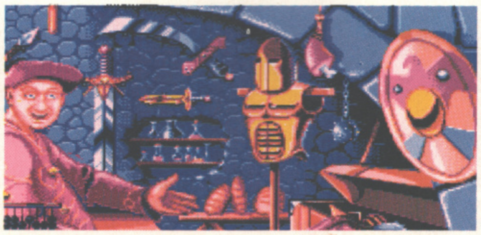
THE BOTTOM LINE

Good enough considering the competition, but it could have surged ahead with just a little more user-friendliness.

78 PERCENT

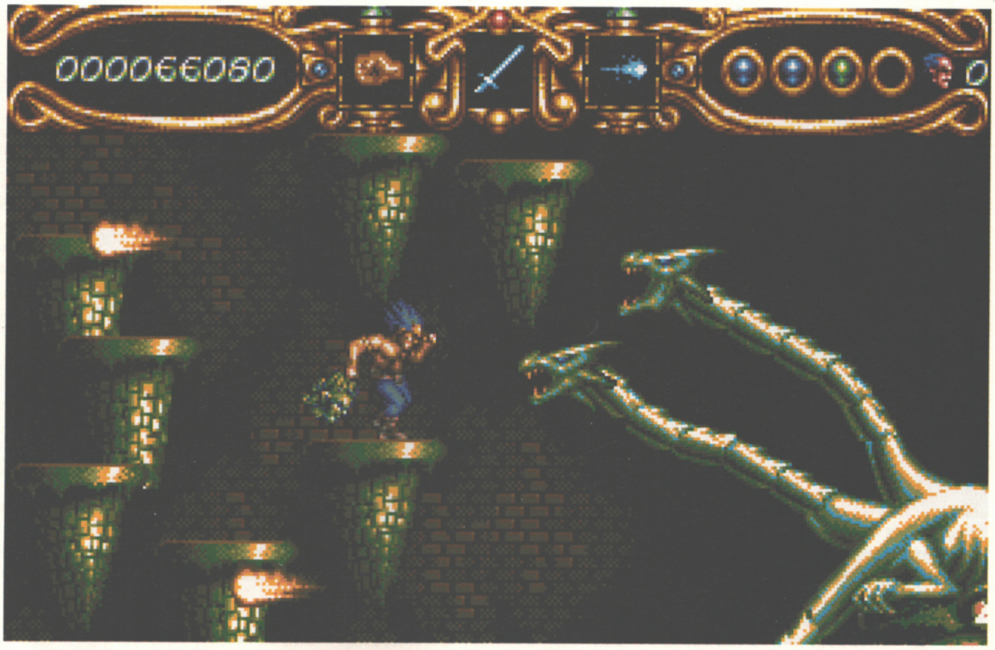


Pop into the pub and you can catch up on gossip, have a kip, get some trough in or find a new party member. Handy, eh?



Ah, ye olde shoppe. Here you can kit up with potion ingredients, food, weapons and the like. Of course, it all costs money...

Game: Myth
Publisher: System 3
Price: £25.99
Authors: Dave Colclough (code), Robin Levy (visuals), Richard Joseph & Phil Thornton (sound)
Other details: Three disks, one meg only
Release: Out now



At the very end of the Greek period you get to shoot it out with this dirty great fire-spitting Hydra. The head of Medusa, which you should have picked up just a minute or two ago, comes in very handy at this point. Indeed, it's the only way you're going to kill it.

MYTH

Here's a game that's been under way almost as long as *Epic*,

System 3 are a funny bunch. Not in a laughably deformed banana-like way you understand, but because of their peculiar 'law unto themselves' modus operandi. The sad thing is that this is obviously a publisher that cares about providing value for money and having good products out there, yet which is having real trouble providing them.

The story can be told fairly simply. Old C64 fans will remember when System 3 were recognised as one of the top developers, with games like the original *Last Ninja* and *IK+* scoring in the nineties everywhere – a remarkable record, but perhaps not quite so surprising when you realise the talent behind the games included such luminaries as Mev Dinc (of *First Samurai* fame) and Archer Maclean. The move onto 16-bit has been a surprisingly tricky one, however, with numerous false starts – perhaps the big name programmers (who've since moved on) have proved impossible to replace, perhaps the games they've done have remained too 8-bit in style.

Whatever the past, this, System 3 insist, is the Amiga game that'll *really* crack it for them. To ensure this is what happens, the company has scrapped three versions so far, apparently due to their poor quality, and have decided to go with this fourth attempt. It's not a bad game, indeed there's much to praise about it, but I can't help feeling – especially in the light of rivals like *Leander*, *Gods* or, indeed, *First Samurai* – that they've still to hit the spot. And I think that's a shame, I really do.

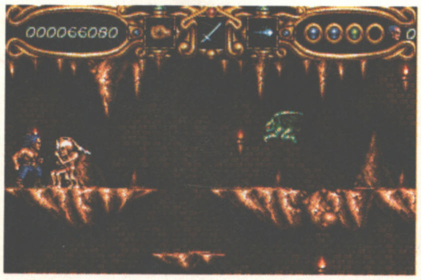
But before I continue, let's take this brief opportunity to fill you in on the storyline. Fans of the (quite spectacular) 8-bit versions of the game from a couple of years ago will be familiar with the basics of it, though a few things have changed since then. As with the 8-bit versions, a Bad God (Dameron) has corrupted assorted Good Gods from various ancient religions – the future of the human race is at stake (of course), which forces you on a mission to put things right, one spread across four time zones. There's an Ancient Greek level, a Norse level , a Celtic and an Egyptian one, each presented as part of a three-disk, five-level mixture of four basic game styles: run 'n' jump romp, shoot-'em-up, beat-'em-up and arcade adventure. Each mythological period, or level, is split into three sections, while an extra fifth stage forms the eventual two-part showdown with Dameron, set somewhere in the timeless void.

So how do these levels work? Well, first up is the Greek one, which concentrates on your jumping from one floating ledge to another and fighting different types and sizes of mythological beasts against a lava-strewn, hell-style backdrop. Level Two, on the other hand, is almost the opposite – there are no platforms, and the emphasis is on combat, set in a spooky Celtic forest.

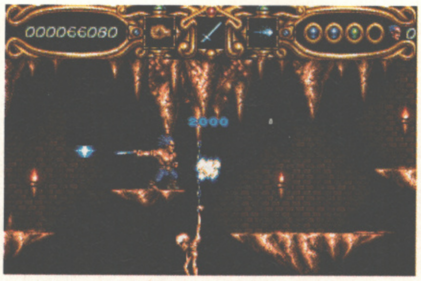
The third stage, in which you eventually get to fight the Norse gods Thor and Odin, consists mainly of leaping around and hacking, while the fourth one, set in Egypt (and chiefly inside a labyrinthine pyramid) requires small amounts of mapping, the solving of logic problems, and a certain amount of combat and precision jumping.

Then there's the fifth and final shoot-'em-up section. It's action all the way here as – set against a backdrop of stars – you have to blast fixed attack patterns of Dameron's creatures before taking him (or it) on directly.

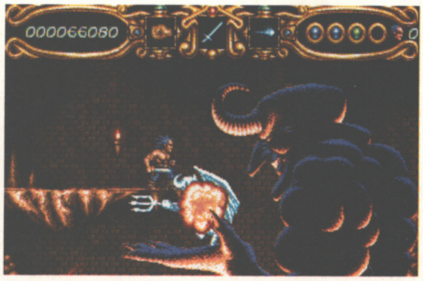
And that's it. One of the biggest changes to the game since the 8-bit originals – and one of the things that seems to have been modified with each (now scrapped) version System 3 have put together – is in the main character. Originally, he was a Michael J Fox-style everyman, in jeans and trainers, somehow



Here we are in Hades: the first section of level one, a multi-directional scrolling cavern full of hellish creatures. Our hero takes on sword-wielding skeletons (collect a sword off one of them) amongst others.



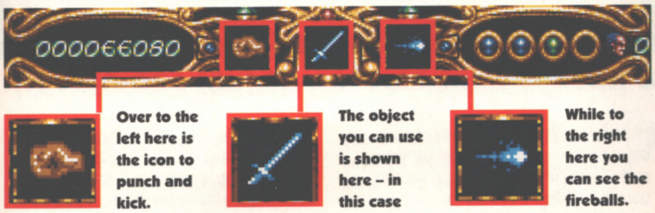
To the far right of this section there's a giant death-dealing Chimera to kill – but you need more than a sword to do it. The first step is to cut down this hanging skeleton, like so...



The skeleton falls into the raging pit of fire below. By decapitating another skeleton and ensuring that its head bounces into the pit, too, this huge devil figure rises from the flames and releases a flying demon.

OBJECTS TO HIT WITH IN MYTH

The Status Panel at the top of the screen shows not only your score and lives, but also which objects you currently hold, represented by the three icons in the centre. Briefly then, this is the sort of thing you can expect.



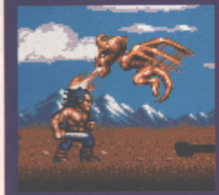
Over to the left here is the icon to punch and kick.

The object you can use is shown here – in this case the sword.

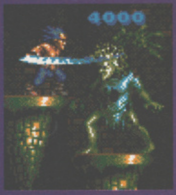
While to the right here you can see the fireballs.

THOSE WHO LIVE BY THE SWORD...

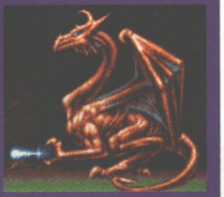
Beasties, nasties and monsters parade all over the ship in *Myth*. If it isn't one legion of the undead trying to put paid to your heroics, then it's a winged dragon hurling balls of nastiness at you. Like these guys...



Anyone remember this scene from *Evil Dead 2*?



That's one in the eye of this spawn of hell!



Nidhog can breathe fire and shoot laser things.

but now, just like *Epic*, it's finally here. This is the fourth version of *Myth* – but have they at last got it right?

dragged into saving the world. Then he was a squat, rather evil-looking console game-type. Now he's mutated again, into a slimmer, taller barbarian warrior, modelled to some extent, it would appear, on 2000AD's character Slaine.

One thing that hasn't changed, though, is System 3's basic way of structuring a game. At first glance you'd probably say the company is attempting to shake off its *Last Ninja* image with this game, and – certainly – it looks quite different. However, look beneath the surface and you'll see the structure is more or less the same.

In all but the last load the action is punctuated by a series of arcade adventure-style puzzles to solve. Here's one: how do you pass the big monster at the end of the first level, Hades? Look at the picture captions for some heavy clues as to the answer, and while you're doing so consider this – is this really a logic problem at all, or merely a question of trial and error? The solutions are usually so unobvious – much like those (eventually) found in the *Ninja* series – that you're more likely to stumble across them accidentally than really work them out. In doing so you'll probably find yourself dying many, many times, and we all know how frustrating that can be...

The problem is given further emphasis by the sizes of the levels – all fairly small – so a good deal of your playing time is likely to be spent mucking around with the three or so main puzzles you'll find per load. It all makes the game experience a little too linear for my liking – there's little of the flexibility needed to keep your on-going interest high. Once you've finished the game there seems little point in playing it through again.

GAME LOGIC MYTHING IN ACTION

So where does that leave us? Well, with a disappointing game, and one where the whole tends to be less than the sum of its parts. In many ways *Myth* is too ambitious for its own good, falling between not two, not three, but four different stools. In short, there are too many different bits to it, each one is too short to really grab the interest, and the overly linear puzzle solving game style means it's a game you'll only want to play through once. It's a shame, considering how many good things there are in *Myth*. Like these, for instance:

> **"All a little too linear for my liking"**

For a start, there's over 700K of sound in *Myth*, and to be fair it shows. Almost every action or event has a suitable sampled sound, and most of them are a pleasure to hear. There's always some background noise for atmosphere – take the roaring flames and screams of tormented souls in Hades (which grow louder as you get near) for instance, or the thunderstorm in the Celtic forest. There's some speech too, and that works well enough.

Then there are the visuals. The main character alone has 175 frames of animation, used to show him running and jumping and fighting (often while carrying an object at the same time). It looks nice, though I can't help feeling we'd be better off without a few of the poses and with a bit more effort spent on making him move faster, and in less of a stop-start fashion too. Seeing our hero's arms pull back in preparation for a punch, or seeming to make a real effort to jump and land, is all very well, but gets frustrating when he should simply be running faster.

It's a nice looking game then, and one which seems to have garnered rave reviews elsewhere, but I can't help feeling it's all a bit of a – and sorry about this – mythed opportunity. We're not going to be looking back on this as a classic a year on from now, and considering the high targets System 3 are (quite rightly) setting themselves, it has to be seen as some sort of failure. An okay buy, but little more.

●*GARY PENN*

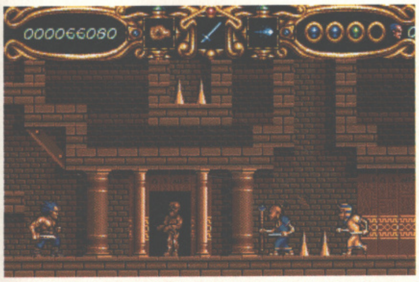
UPPERS Novel – and occasionally playable – blend of game styles: beat-'em-up, shoot-'em-up, run'n'jump and arcade adventure, presented with some sporadically beautiful graphics. Control of the hero is intuitive and easy to handle – and the limited edition version comes with a free full-colour comic book!

DOWNERS The main character's many animation frames mean that his movement is sometimes too sluggish for comfort. There's actually not a great deal to do either – the levels are fairly small, the 'puzzles' sometimes annoying, and the game structure really rather old-fashioned in feel.

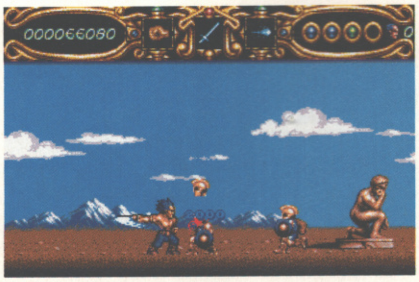
THE BOTTOM LINE

System 3 certainly get an 'A' for effort. *Myth* is a well-researched and, by and large, lively project with high-spots of gloss and variety. Unfortunately it lacks real depth. Look out for the sequel, *Dawn Of Steel* (System 3 isn't sure when that will happen, as it's still at the storyboard stage) and remember, you'll need one megabyte or more of RAM.

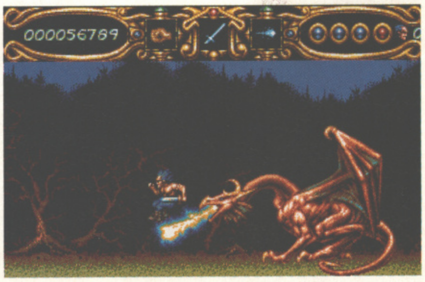
67 PERCENT



In this scene from the Egyptian era, our hero has made his way into a pyramid to do battle with the living, the undead and plenty of tricky traps (such as vicious spikes popping unexpectedly up from the floor).

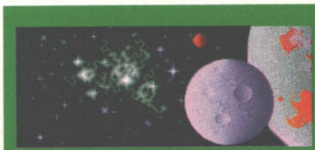


Chopping off the soldiers heads isn't just terrific fun – you also get more points than if you'd just stabbed them to death. This horizontally scrolling section is the second one you'll find in the Greek era.

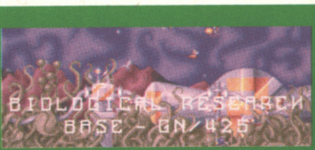


This here fire-breathing dragon – name of Nidhog – who you find at the end of the Norse period initially seems to be invincible, but he *does* have a weak spot. The trick, you see, is in finding out where it is...

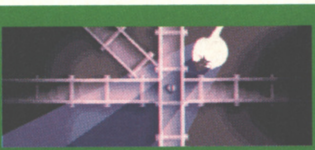
Game: Hostile Breed
Publisher: Palace
Price: £25.99
Authors: Rob Stevens (programming & design), Jo Walker (graphics & design)
Other details: One meg recommended
Release: Out now



Deep in the Genario system it's just another day at the research lab...



...until an earthquake cracks the lab shell, that is. Your defences are down...



...and it's only a matter of time before the hostile aliens infiltrate the complex.

Is Palace's bug-fest a new kind of blaster, or just too clever

Ahh, the joys of bugs. Not those of the programming variety. Oh no, I'm talking about the kind which have more than their fare share of legs, eyes, and wings. The kind which flap around, wait until you're asleep, crawl up your nostrils, and lay eggs in your brain. You know.

Hostile Breed certainly has bugs in, lots of them, and they do some rather nastier things than that too. The plot is your usual Doctor Who scenario – we've got an eight-spoked research base located on the mysterious planet Genario, we've got a team of scientists happily ensconced inside, and we've got several thousand bio-mechanoid superbugs and horror-weeds lounging around outside, cursing their lack of welding equipment, and just waiting for their big break.

Said break comes with a handy dandy earthquake which smashes the research station's outer defenses to smithereens. Soon all eight spokes are overrun, with only the central control room, located at the hub, remaining bug-free. But the creatures are advancing down all eight corridors, and time is running out.

If you were one of those scientists, what would you do in this situation? That's right, one of you would get aboard the last remaining spacecraft left in dock, cockily announce to the rest of the crew that they should 'Smoke me a kipper, I'll be back for breakfast', and jet off around the eight spokes, blasting the scummy space bugs. (Okay, okay, so I made the kippers bit up, but you get the gist.)

So that's the customary silly (though for once, actually relevant) plot over with – now onto game machanics. It's interesting to note that programmer Rob Stevens' original inspiration for this was *Defender*. Armed with the idea of updating the Williams classic, his first (and arguably most important) task was to create the hundreds of different alien types needed, each of which follows astoundingly realistic behavioural patterns. Larvae hatch, fly off and lay eggs, the eggs hatch, and so the cycle continues, inexorably (I love that word) getting closer and closer to the control centre. Even the alien plants (including hero – as opposed to fly – traps) follow a logical growth and reproduction model, and it all serves to complicate the game beyond the obvious shoot-'em-up basis.

> **"A do-everythig-at-once conept"**

In play then, it operates on several levels. First is the blaster – it's possible to venture down any of the eight space station spokes, blasting all and sundry, while stopping off at the landing pads littered around the corridors. Landing on one of these brings up a sub-game however – complication number one – where a security lock must be re-aligned.

Achieve this and a piece of cargo could be the prize. This could be some sort of extra armanent (maybe napalm bombs, missiles and the like) or upgrades for the control centre (which I'll come back to in a moment). While they may not be levels exactly, each of the eight spokes has its own individual look, and (just for added fun) it's own breeds of aggressor.

And of course, because they're spokes, if any particular lot proves too tough to you, you can always turn around and fly back down the corridor towards the control centre again.

It's here, back at base, we come across complications number two to 259. You see, in addition to jetting around and blasting stuff, the player must also control the reactor, the remaining robot production line, and the weapons systems. There are computer terminals littered around the place which can give you quite a lot of helpful information too, but that's already quite enough to worry about for the first time player.

I guess at this point it's about time for a few quick words on robot manufacturing. The first (and most essential) robots will patch up holes in the corridor walls (thus preventing any more aliens invading, though the existing ones will, of course, continue to breed), while other, hardly less essential types, repair wiring, landing pads (and other structural damage) and the rail system.

The weapons screen gives control of all auto-defences in each corridor (which unfortunately consume power faster than a two bar electric fire) and access to the cannon (heh heh). Requiring half the battery charge (otherwise your reactor goes critical), the cannon can be directed down any corridor and will blast the front line of aliens, giving you just that little bit extra time to play with.

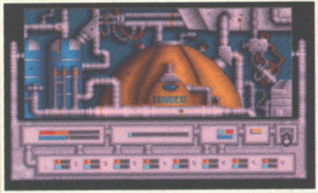
So what do I make of it? Well, okay, it sounds like an impossibly complex hybrid of game styles, but surprisingly enough, I found the constant to-ing and fro-ing the most enjoyable aspect of the game (once I'd worked out what the hell I was doing). My main criticisms actually lie with the shoot-'em-up side of things. The player's craft is too large and sluggish, the playing area too small and the speed of the bugs makes flying around a bit of a pain. It's incredibly hard to avoid crashing into the bugs half the time, while for a game based on *Defender*, *Hostile Breed* lacks fluid craft control. An agile, slightly inertia-prone little space-ship would have worked a treat, but instead we get a leviathan of a thing which trundles around

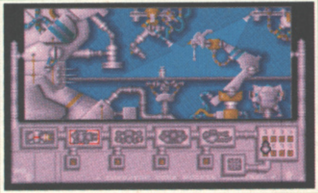
HOSTILE

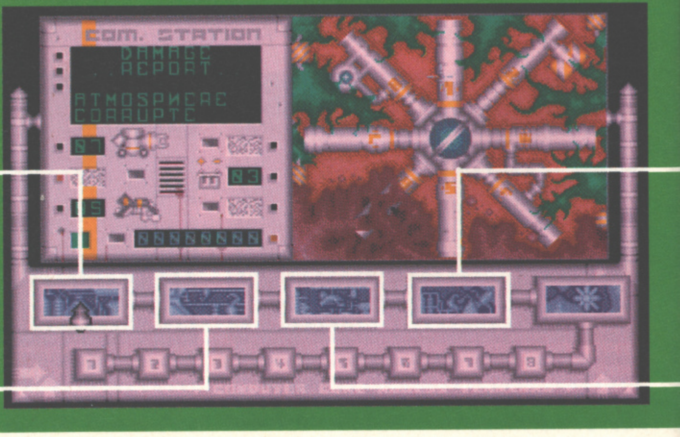
A COMPLEX COMPLEX

Taking a quick stroll round the most important bits of the control centre, it's obvious that there's a lot to be taken care of (usually all at the same time). On the right there you can see the main reactor. Dangerous stuff.

Next along, we come to the robot production line. Provided with enough energy (courtesy of the main reactor), it will churn out little droids until the end of time. Of course, it's not the fastest production line in the world, and the demand usually outstrips supply by tenfold, but you can't have everything.







Whether the people live – or this guy eats them – is in your hands!

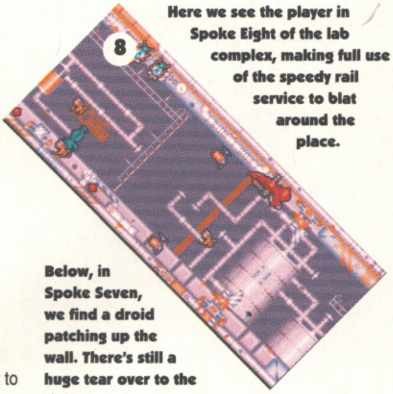
for its own good?

(thank goodess they included the speed rail!) picking off the bad guys in a ponderous, unenthusiastic kind of way.

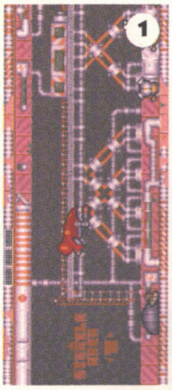
However, when I say that the complications make the game, that's not to imply that they're all a good thing. The terminals are useful, for instance, but I can't see too many people bothering with them, while the inclusion of landing pad and electricity cable-eating bugs (and robots to repair them) is perhaps taking things just a bit far. The fact remains though, it's the fight-and-flight stuff which lets the side down.

In the end then, this is something of a damn fine game – and a very addictive one – if flawed. Certainly, the core of the thing is fabulous (the do-everything-at-once concept recalls the Spectrum classics *Worse Things Happen At Sea* and *Psytron*), while the graphics are wonderfully atmospheric (full marks too for the intro and end sequences) and the sound surprisingly effective. And it makes such a refreshing change to play an action game which actually requires a modicum of intelligence. It's just that I feel a little more attention should have been given to the arcade side of things. As it stands, *Hostile Breed* is a 'buy on the proviso that you want an utterly complex hybrid' kind of affair. Okay?

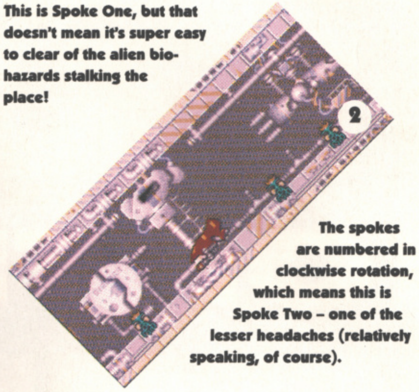
● ***MARK RAMSHAW***



Here we see the player in Spoke Eight of the lab complex, making full use of the speedy rail service to blat around the place.

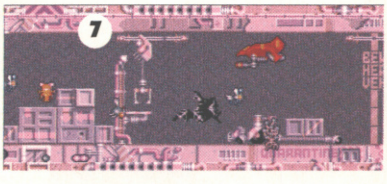


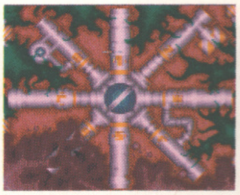
This is Spoke One, but that doesn't mean it's super easy to clear of the alien bio-hazards stalking the place!

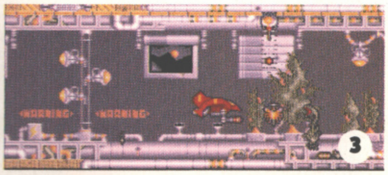


The spokes are numbered in clockwise rotation, which means this is Spoke Two – one of the lesser headaches (relatively speaking, of course).

Below, in Spoke Seven, we find a droid patching up the wall. There's still a huge tear over to the right though.

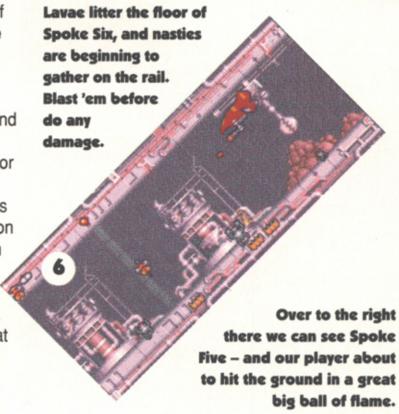


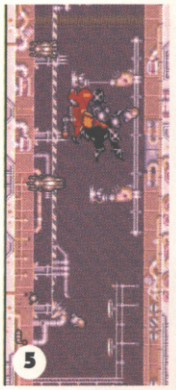




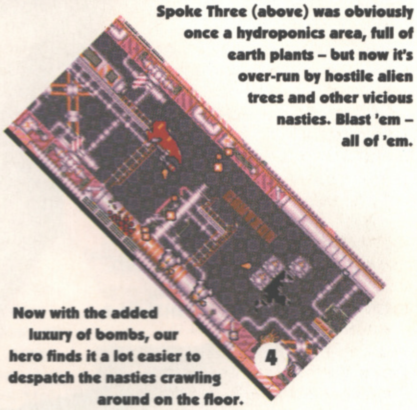
Spoke Three (above) was obviously once a hydroponics area, full of earth plants – but now it's over-run by hostile alien trees and other vicious nasties. Blast 'em – all of 'em.

Lavae litter the floor of Spoke Six, and nasties are beginning to gather on the rail. Blast 'em before do any damage.



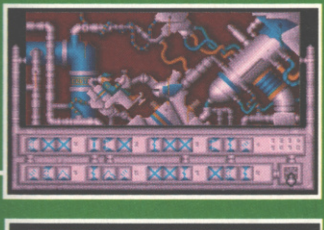


Over to the right there we can see Spoke Five – and our player about to hit the ground in a great big ball of flame.

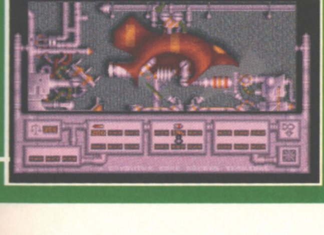


Now with the added luxury of bombs, our hero finds it a lot easier to despatch the nasties crawling around on the floor.

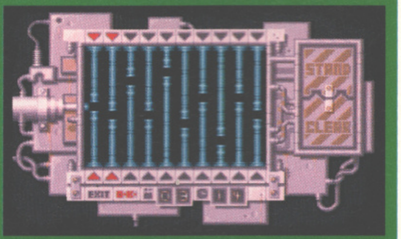
BREED



This evil looking screen houses the defence systems – including that there whopping great gun. Remember to charge the batteries to half way first – otherwise the reactor will go critical.



The fish-like object pictured left is actually the player's craft. This screen gives accesss to all the various weapons and power-ups collected from landing pads. (Quite why the space ship looks completely different in the main arcade bit, I've no idea.)



Reaching an active landing pad brings up this wonderfully devious little sub-game. Two bars are highlighted, and as one is raised the other will lower. The important thing is to get all the gaps lined up in the middle before the time limit runs out. A lock will then slide from left to right, and if it slides all the way, the cargo can be taken.

▲ **UPPERS** Luvverly graphics, an entertaining mix of game styles, unusual do-everything-at-once concept, and the most complex and fascinating bad guys around. You tell me *another* game where the nasties breed and evolve...

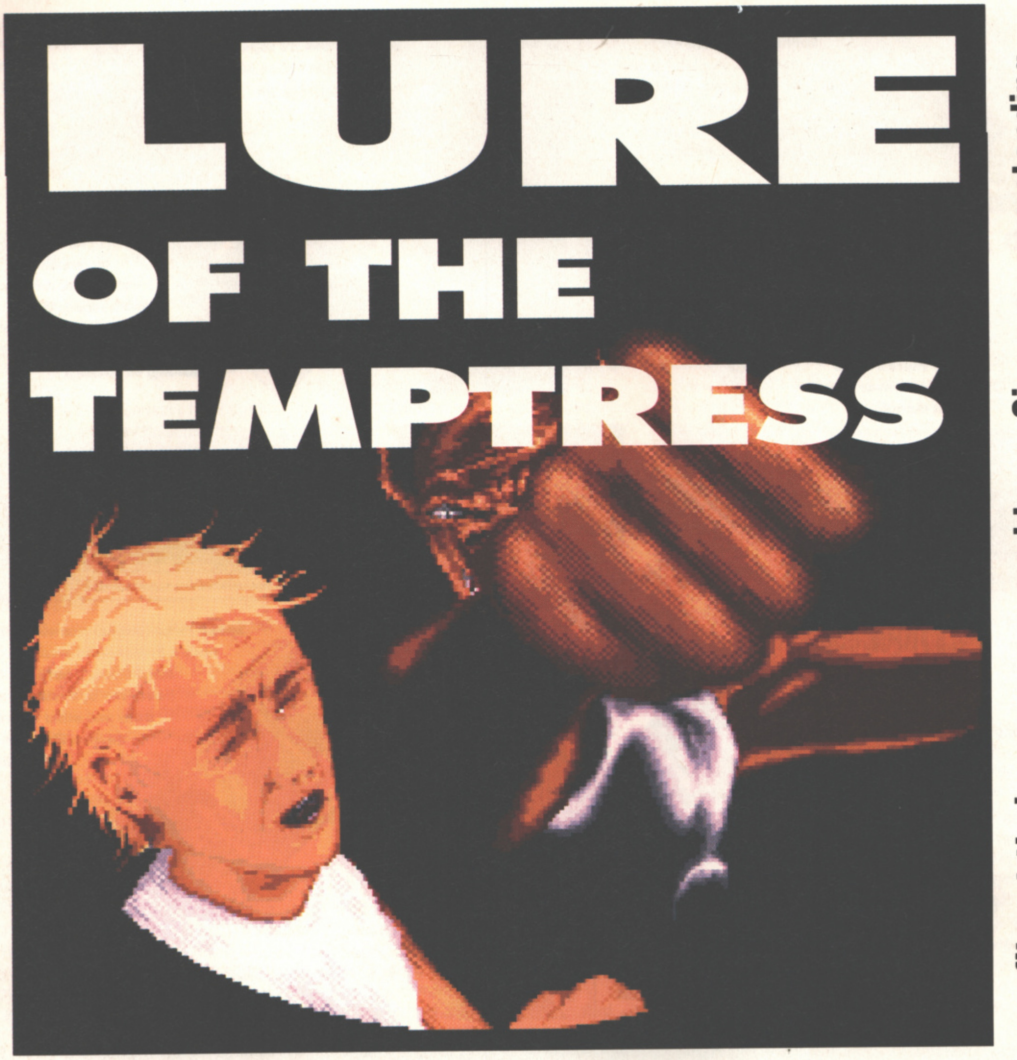
▼ **DOWNERS** The shoot-'em-up element doesn't work as well as it should, and there's no doubt that some will be overwhelmed by the whole thing. Half meg owners will find the disk swapping a bind.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Brave, different, and mostly successful attempt to add intelligence to the shoot-'em-up. Ironic, then, that it's the shoot-'em-up bit that lets the side down, preventing the game from being a 90 percenter. Which is why it gets...

82 PERCENT

LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS



The Brits hit back, with an adventure which promises to beat Lucasfilm at their own game, and leave Sierra games standing.

Game: Lure Of The Temptress
Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £30.99
Author: Revolution
Release: July

Revolution, a British based development team, have come up with one of the finest adventure games yet, proving that not all 'big' adventure releases come from the other side of the Atlantic. Make no mistake – *Lure of the Temptress* is a very welcome addition to this American-dominated genre, coming across as a sort of mix between Sierra's *King's Quest* and Lucasfilm's *The Secret of Monkey Island 2*.

Indeed, with *Temptress*' release following so closely on the heels of *Monkey Island 2* (also reviewed this issue), it seems appropriate to compare the two. *Lure of the Temptress* definitely has a good deal less humour than *Monkey Island 2* – it'd be a brave man who tried to beat Lucasfilm at that game, after all – but more than makes up for it in other areas. So how does this more subtley flavoured Brit weigh up to its American counterpart?

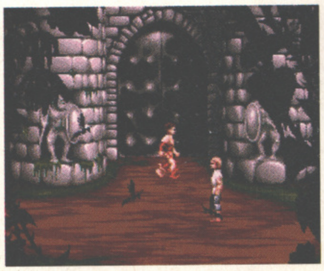
The scenario first: you are Diermot, an unenthusiastic hero who finds himself the prisoner of the evil Selena, the Temptress from which the game takes its name. She's taken over the town of Turnvale with her hordes of creepy meathead mutants, the Skorl, and to start with you're in no position to stop her. You begin the adventure trapped in a cell, you see, deep inside the dungeons and torture chambers of the evil femme's pad. Your first task, then, is obviously to escape to the town, where you can start to do some good, the ultimate aim of the game being to dethrone the evil temptress and rescue an innocent young girl called Goewin, who's been imprisoned by the nasty Skorl.

The essence of *Temptress* is its character interaction. Indeed, Temptress has a lot more of this than *Monkey Island 2*, and this is the essential difference between the two games. You'll find well over 25 different characters here – all acting individually. They go about their daily life in the quaint, cobbled streets of the town, chatting whenever they please – you might be in a pub having a word with the blacksmith, when an old woman walks up to the bar and has a conversation with the barmaid about her noisy neighbours, for instance.

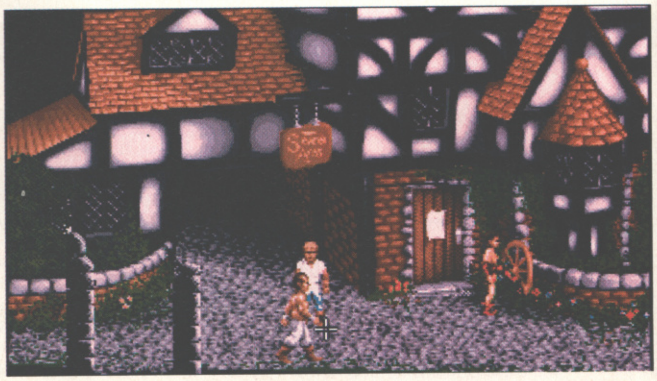
> **"A stylish game that shows loads of potential"**

Of course, all this talking proves incredibly useful. To succeed in this game you must consult and chat with every character possible. And when I say every character, I mean *every* character – right at the beginning you'll come across a bloke called Wulfe, another prisoner, hanging in shackles from the dungeon wall. He's dying, but in exchange for a drink he tells you some important info to get you started on your quest. Here, too, you'll find the serf joker, Ratpouch, who on release from a torture rack becomes your loyal and faithful servant.

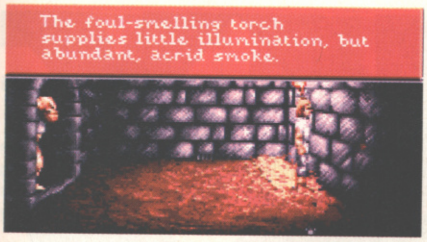
Okay, so now that you're at least a little bit familiar with the game's scenario, let's talk about it's mechanics. Much of the gameplay is based on questioning other characters, as I said, which is achieved by first finding someone to talk to, then using the mouse to click on that character. This brings up a menu of possible lines to open up the conversation. You can choose between Ask, Tell, Bribe, or Talk To categories from



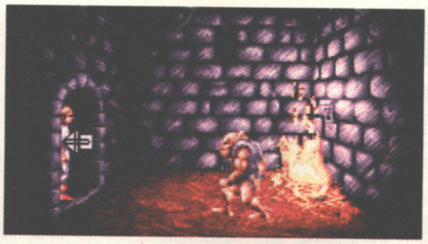
Here's that lovely sequence with the wasps, your first sight of the town.

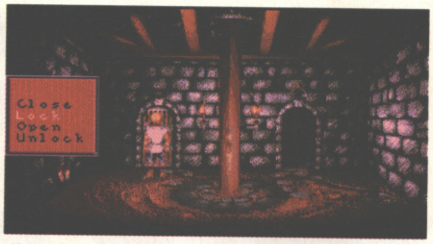


You can just feel that olde worlde charm, can't you? Here's one of the pubs with our hero, his sidekick and a stranger waiting around on the cobbles for opening time.

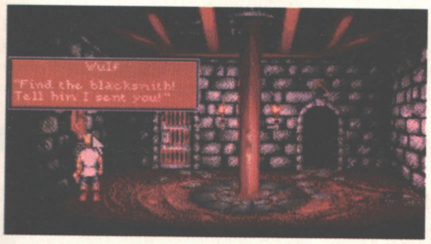

The foul-smelling torch supplies little illumination, but abundant, acrid smoke.

The dank cell where you begin the game. Hmm, don't wanna stay here all the time, so how do we get out?


Easy, innit? Just set fire to your straw bed. Then run out the cell door when the meathead Skorl guard walks in.

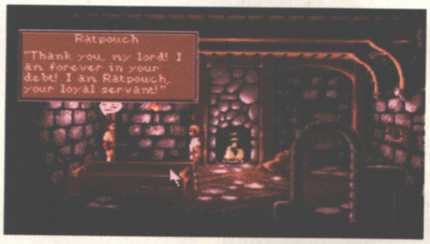


Now, close the cell door and lock it. You're sure to have no more hassle from that ugly mutant guard. Ha!


Wulf

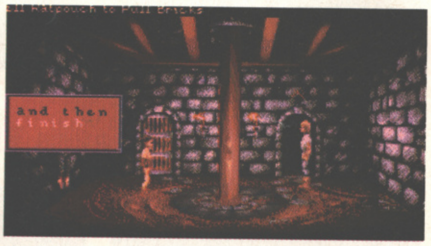
"Find the blacksmith! Tell him I sent you!"

Give Wulfe a drink and he'll tell you where to go once you're free. He also knows of a secret escape passage...


Ratpouch

"Thank you, my lord! I am forever in your debt! I am Ratpouch, your loyal servant!"

Free Ratpouch from the rack using the knife. You need him to find the secret passage behind the prison wall.


ell Ratpouch to Pull Bricks

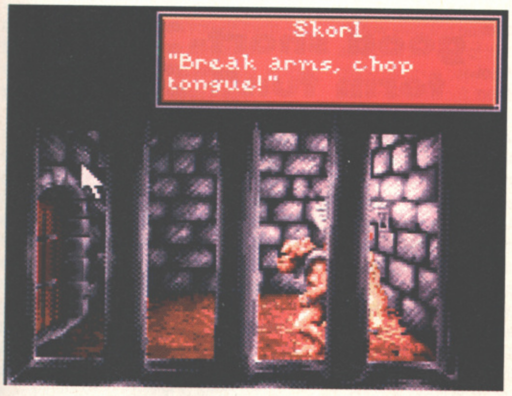
You haven't got the energy to rémove those loose bricks in the prison wall, so tell Ratpouch to do it..

the list which, when selected, bring up a series of menus to help you construct a sentence. In practice it's not complicated at all – indeed, very intuitive, in many ways more effective than the well worn techniques used by *Monkey Island 2*. It's more flexible too – you're not limited to a short list of pre-prepared responses to choose between.

This system enables you to construct some quite out-of the-ordinary requests. For example, you can ask Gwynn, an old lady in one of the bars, if she has a door. It might not get you anywhere – it's a fairly pointless request, after all – but even though the tongue-in-cheek response you'll get is a fairly standard one that you'll hear a few times in the game, the fact that you're allowed to ask it in the first place helps build a sense of reality beyond the sort of interactive storybook effect you sometimes get from Lucasfilm releases. The trade off is that the jokes aren't as sharp or as well orchestrated as in *Monkey 2* – you do get the odd bit of funny stuff, but it won't be long before the same pun is repeated.

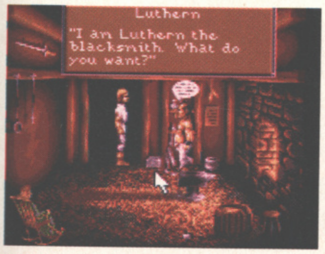
> **"The essence of *Temptress* is character interaction"**

Another feature that makes *Temptress* feel more versatile than either Sierra's *King's Quest* or *Monkey Island 2* is the command option. This is brought up via the game menus and not only proves very useful, it also allows you to set up a few laughs. For instance, there was much guffawing in the AMIGA POWER office when I sent Ratpouch to the bar. He makes a real twit of himself ordering the beers, you see – watch him get turned down for looking underage, then eventually get served with a shandy.


Skorl

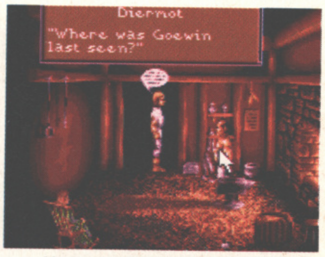
"Break arms, chop tongue!"

If you've got time, have a laugh watching the Skorl pacing up and down, cursing you for locking him up in the cell. What a thicky!


Luthern

"I am Luthern the blacksmith. What do you want?"

Finally you find the blacksmith, who Wulfe told you about. Use the TalkTo option...


Diermot

"Where was Goewin last seen?"

...and he'll tell you about Goewin and where to find her and her herbs.

It isn't all funny stuff, however – in the later stages of the game the command facility becomes very important, when giving the correct order can be a matter of life or death. Your use of commands provides the backbone of this game – it's a very effective feature, one that Sierra and Lucasfilm would do well to pick up on.

Lure Of The Temptress doesn't fall down in providing atmosphere either – it shares with *Monkey Island 2* the fact that it's got bags of the stuff. Indeed, with its quaint olde worlde pubs, cottages and cobbled streets all enclosed by a towering city wall, *Temptress*' scenery is perhaps more believable (at least to a UK audience) than many we've seen – it brings to mind the historical streets and olde worlde feel of York. Might it be that the Hull-based team behind the game were inspired by their neighbouring minster city?

The great area where *Temptress* score over most rivals, though – and especially the otherwise-very-impressive *Monkey Island 2* – is in its user friendliness. The minimal disk swapping of *Temptress* comes as an incredible relief after the 11 disk nightmare of *Monkey 2*. Though you'd ideally have a second disk drive to get the most fun out of this – *Temptress* does test your patience with its disk accessing on single drive Amigas – this is by no means the nightmare it could have been.

This is a great game, then. Amazingly, I've got this far into the review without really mentioning the graphics yet – there was so much to say – so I'll make amends now. Visually *Temptress* is gorgeous – in my book its animation and graphics are just as good, if not better than, those in *Monkey Island 2*. (A good example is the animated wasp sequence when you reach town from the secret passage – it's lovely.)

So where does that leave us? Well, with is a very big game, full of scope, and packed with plenty to keep the avid adventurer content. On their first attempt, Revolution have come up with an adventure game to knock the stuffing out of recent Sierra efforts, and to go head-to-head with its Lucasfilm peers. It's a quite remarkable achievement.

● ***MATTHEW SQUIRES***

▲ **UPPERS** A stylish game that shows loads of potential. Mouthwatering graphics and animation surround an expertly written adventure. The great attention to detail prevails throughout the game, while the character interaction and dialogue system is a winner.

▼ **DOWNERS** There is very little wrong with *Temptress* to put your finger on, to be honest. If I had to find fault anywhere it would be the loading, which can be tedious tedious (with loading between every location) when you're running it from the one disk drive.

THE BOTTOM LINE

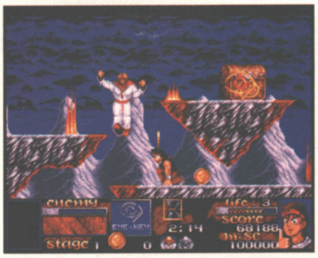
This game may not be as big as *Monkey Island 2*, but it's seven quid cheaper and has a hell of lot fewer disks. It doesn't contain as much humour as *Monkey Island 2*, but if you prefer the slightly more serious approach to adventures (as I do) you'll love it. If you're serious about adventure games – even if you're a devoted *Monkey*-ite – do yourself a favour and check *Temptress* out. You won't be disappointed.

88 PERCENT

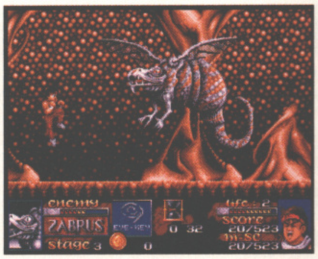
Game: Risky Woods
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £25.99
Authors: Ricardo Puerto (code) and Raul Lopez (graphics) at Zeus Software for Dinamic
Release: Out now

RISKY WOODS

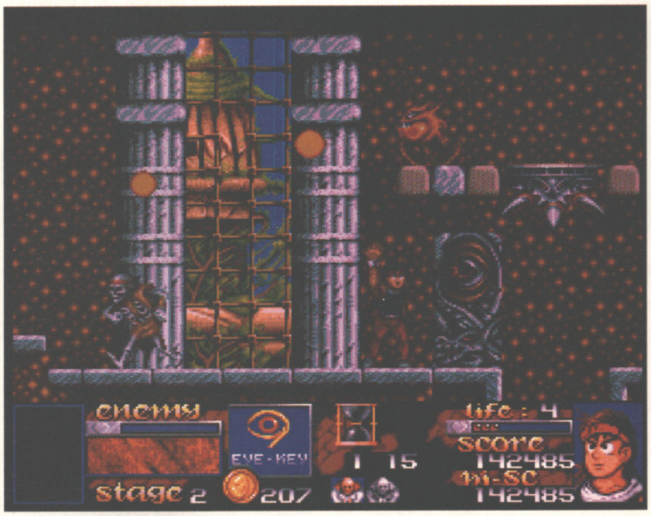
With *Risky Woods*, even Electronic Arts are muscling in on the console-style beat-



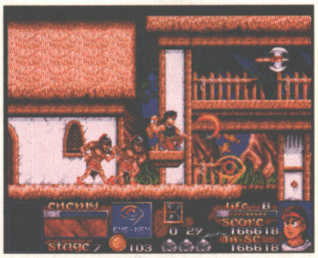
Stunning stuff: this monk whizzes into the sky after you've released him from stone.



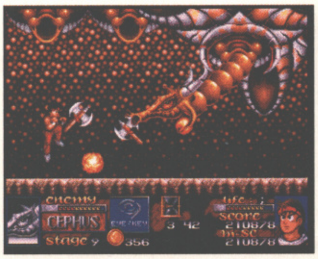
In level three you meet the first of the guardian beasties: in this case it's Zabrus.



Young Rohan finally makes it to one of the 'eye tolls' on stage two – but, as you can see at the bottom of the screen, there's still one stone-capsuled monk to release yet.



After buying a fab throwing axe at the shop, watch the gore as it rips into the various demons' mutant flesh.



In stage nine you'll really need that axe to slice up this beastly dragon – he suffers from a very bad case of hell halitosis!

I can just imagine how this one came together. Somewhere in Europe in the not too distant past, a Spanish development team (for Zeus Software, who originally developed this for Madrid-based Dinamic, are Spanish) decided to sit down over a meal to discuss this brand new game they were putting together. But – oh no! – they decided to try this new restaurant in town, a sushi bar, and somehow the Japanese influence got lodged in their minds, and grew and grew.

They must have been back to that old sushi bar quite a few times during development too, for the over-hard-yet-graphically-impressive style of game that Spanish developers used to specialise in (remember Dinamic's older stuff, like *Army Moves*, *Navy Moves* and *After The War*?) has been all but dropped in favour of one of those wannabe Mega Drive games that seem to be all the rage at the moment. There's lots of very similar competition around at the moment, so what chance does *Risky Woods* stand?

> **"Great to look at... good short-term fun"**

Well, for a start it's got just about all the standard features of the genre. It's got pretty, big-eyed graphics, crowd pleasing parallax scrolling, lots of collectables, and big end-of-level baddies, all wrapped up behind a suitably odd (and rather silly) name. Because it's such a typical console-style game, there are half a dozen other recent releases we could legitimately compare it too, but I've picked Psygnosis' recent *Leander* – the current AMIGA POWER benchmark for 'this sort of thing'.

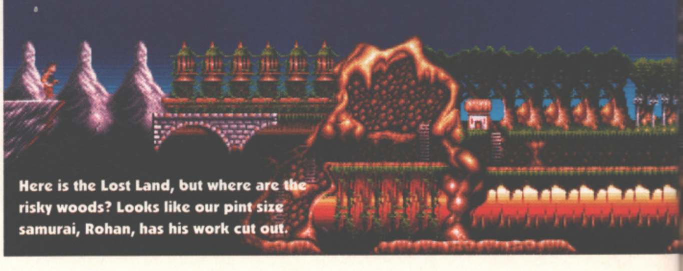
On initial impressions there's not really much to chose between the two games. Both of them have a very slick feel, with smooth scrolling and big sprites – at first it all comes down to which graphics style you prefer. In the interests of creating a bit of tension, I'm not going to tell you if things change after you've played both games for a while – not just yet anyway. Instead let's take a closer look at the ins and outs of the game they're all calling *Risky Woods*.

The story of *Risky Woods* (I keep wanting to write 'Wisky Woods') takes place in a Japan-esque 'Lost Land' in a time when an order of monks guarded the place. Or, at least, they *used* to guard it – until a wicked demon character called Draxos came along and turned them all to stone! Evil has taken over pretty much, then, with vicious creatures everywhere, and rotting animated skeletons roaming the woods, making them rather (ahem) 'risky'. The kingdom is not safe until you, in the guise of a young warrior called Rohan, arrive on the scene.

Right, so, as you may have guessed by now, it's up to you to enter the Risky Woods, free the monks from Draxos' stoney spells and send the evil tyrant back to hell (or wherever it was he came from). It's the classic Japanese fairytale, if you like, where the young samurai-type comes along, helps out the wise men, and banishes evil.

The game is built up of 12 stages –

THAT GAME MAP IN FULL!



Here is the Lost Land, but where are the risky woods? Looks like our pint size samurai, Rohan, has his work cut out.

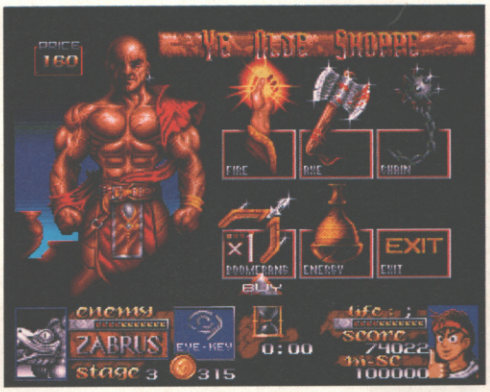
SHOP'N'DROP

The toughest parts of the game to deal with are the guardian monsters. Luckily, they all get inroduced by the game, so you know exactly what you're facing....

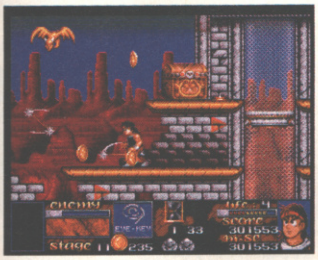
First, spend all those coins you've picked up from the carcasses of dead demons on groovy new weapons. Now check out your next guardian monster. This is Zabrus – he's not that strong, as you can see from his strength bar, so a boomerang will probably do the job nicely.

Once you've selected the appropriate weapon, it's worth considering whether you're going to need any extra energy. You can buy that here too, a must for later stages in the game where the monsters are a lot stronger.

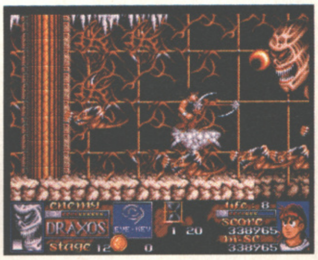
Everything is clearly marked out on the screen for you. The sandglass represents the time you've got to complete each stage. Rohan's animated face shows how well you're doing.



'em-up, with this lush looking epic – from Spain of all places!



Use chains to pummel those flying demons – and don't forget the treasure!



Finally, the most dastardly demon of them all. He's tough, he's foul, he's Draxos.

with a more or less continuous flow of evil demons in all shapes and sizes out to stop you, and a big end-of-zone guardian cropping up every few levels. You're given three lives to help you out – but keep an eye on the time limit for each level, and the set number of monks you must free on each one. Throughout the game, enemy demons drop coins when you kill them – these you can use to buy weapons, strength and extra lives at the shop, which you'll find at the end of each stage.

Other important items to look out for are the halves of 'eye keys' that occasionally crop up, guarded by jealous guardian demons. Kill the guardians, then put the two pieces together to form the completed eye key – you can now use these at 'eye toll gates', which control entry through each stage. You'd better make sure you collect all the eye halves you find as you come to them too – they're the only way off a level, and (unlike in *Leander*) there's no going back more than a couple of screens to collect stuff you missed. Another thing to be on the look out for treasure chests. Open them up wherever they appear – they throw out all sorts of goodies, but be careful not to pick up certain items which can hinder as well as help you!

As the game advances, the terrain and obstacles in your way get more difficult to deal with. Take, for example, the narrow stepping posts you must jump across at the end of the first stage. A giant blade rears up between them to make life even more difficult for you, while demons fly in from either side. And individual obstacles can get tougher than that too...!

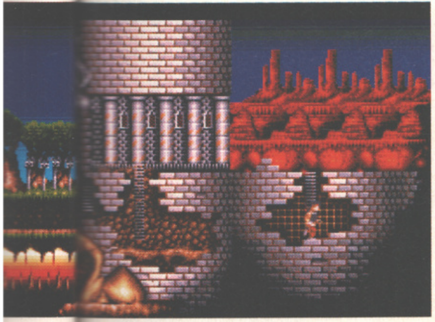
The only other major game elements to deal with are the guardian monsters, which live in caves between each zone. Their strength gets greater the further into the game you get, so make sure you increase the power of your weaponry at the shop. (You're unlikely to get very far if you don't.) You'll find the shop very easy to use, simply by selecting the appropriate icons.

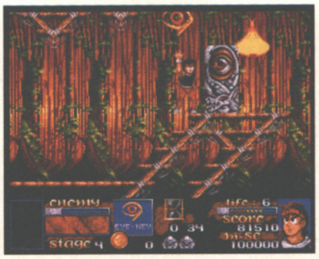
And that, in a nutshell, is the game. So how does it shape up against all the other console-inspired platformers, particularly (if you remember that far back) *Leander*? Well, on its own terms you can't deny it's lots of fun – so much so that you're likely to bash through it in a few days, not so much because it's particularly small, but simply because you'll be going at it so much.

That said though, there are a few specific and important niggles. The controls, while okay, are still a fair way from spot on – our hero is rather more plodding than I would like (though not as bad as the bloke in *Gods*, thank goodness) while his jumping ability sometimes feels pathetically weedy. I wish you were given a bit more freedom of movement too – the very best platform games are less linear than this, and particularly when success depends so much upon collecting the eye keys you'd think being able to search behind you would be essential.

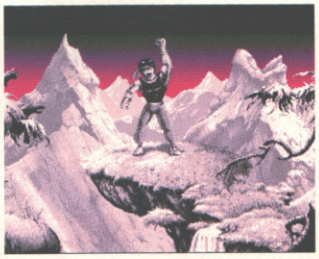
Still, it's not a bad buy at all. I found the first seven levels absorbing and entertaining, the hectic sound effects, frenzied animation, and pretty graphics making for an atmospheric experience. That said, the later stages – when you realise that really nothing changes from level to level, save for the graphics – begin to get a bit dull (a problem also suffered by *Leander*, if we're being fair). Great to look at, then, and good short term fun, and while it's probably on a par with *Leander* et al, it's certainly no better than them. Our favourite of the type remains *First Samurai* (where you get a lot more freedom of movement) but you could do a lot worse than this.

● ***MATTHEW SQUIRES***





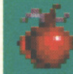
Rohan shows us just how those 'eye tolls' work, throwing his 'eye key' up in the air, while pulling a very odd face.



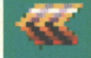
Our victorious hero raises his fist in the air. "Phew!", he says "I'm glad that's over. Can I have a new pair of trousers now?"

RISKY POWER-UPS

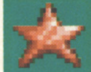
Key to the goodies and not-so-goodies in the treasure chests...



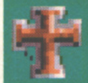
Apples – Can be worth 10,000 points (*or* put you to sleep, losing valuable game time).Very risky.



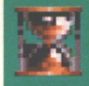
Arrow – Worth 10,000 points (*or* back tracks you to an earlier point in the level). Again, risky.



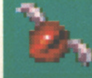
Star – Worth 5,000 points each. Not bad at all.



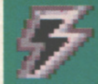
Cross – Worth 10,000 points. Luvverly jubberly.



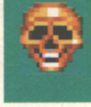
Sandglass – This is well worth picking up for a whole extra minute of game time.



Heart – Gives you an extra three notches of energy. Helpful.



Thunderbolt – This makes you temporarily immune to damage. Dead useful.



Skull – Loses you six notches of energy or stands you and the game upside down. Avoid!

△ **UPPERS** Tasty elements of the very best console-esque platform action are abundant in *Risky Woods*. The graphics, animation and sound are presented fairly expertly too, while a couple of interesting touches (the 'bad' power ups, for instance) keep you interested.

▽ **DOWNERS** Restrictive one way scrolling, non-perfect controllability, and shallow game play *do* let the game down. There are some novel graphic innovations, but there's also a lot we've seen before.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Lacking variation and depth, *Risky Woods* does compensate with plenty of frenzied, and atmospheric platform action. It's a good buy for fans of the genre, but by no means a must.

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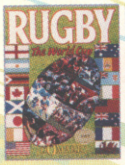
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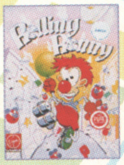
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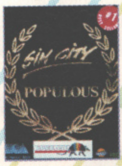
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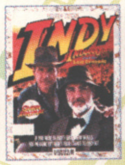
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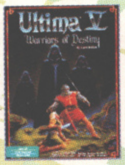
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PARASOL STARS
(Ocean)

Alexander Scott of Sheffield is a bit of a 'star' himself. He reveals that typing 'WHERE ARE MY CREDITS' will give you infinite credits. Paul Leeming of Acomb, on the other hand, advocates pressing F1 for infinite lives.

Justin Jonas of Sheringham puts forward the following suggestions:

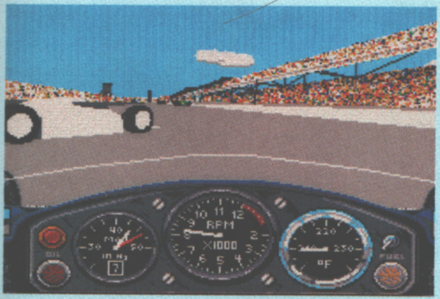
- When faced with a long line of fruit, throw a bubble through the lot to collect them quicky.
- Throughout the game you'll be presented with icons that appear at the top of the screen when collected. Collect any three and all the bad guys will be miraculously zapped, ready for popping. Collect three identical icons and a major miracle will happen – all the bad guys will turn into giant pieces of food worth 100,000 points each. This has the added bonus of opening a secret door on the boss screen (just like in *Bubble Bobble*) where you can pick up extra bonuses.
- If you zap one of the larger bad guys, leave him spinning, as any smaller bad guys that hit him will also be zapped.
- At the end of the game, when you return to Rainbow Islands Land, make sure you have three star icons, as when you finish this land they will cause a giant key to drop from the sky. Pick this up and the final two secret worlds will appear. Now finish these to complete the game.

BUBBY
900920
PRESS FI
CREDIT96
Gorgeous big graphics with *Bubble Bobble* gameplay – that's *Parasol Stars*.

And L Rawlinson of Littleborough claims to have gone one better than us, finding a third secret world that lies between Ocean World, Casino World, Woodland World and Machine World. To access it, find your way to Ocean World level 4. In the middle are some shrimps in a rectangle, and the power-up is a pink heart. Get the heart and kill all the baddies, and then collect all the peppers (which isn't easy, as the top row must be shot with the lightning from outside). The screen should then flash and the map of the universe will appear, showing the location of the new world.

INDIANAPOLIS 500
(Electronic Arts)

At the risk of turning the mag into a thinly disguised replica of the Kwik-Fit training manual, Gideon Cresswell of Maidstone reckons that H Jordan's lap time (AP 12) is pathetic. He thinks he can chop a wacking 0.84 seconds off it, with a car that'll top 250 mph on the straights and turn in a lap time of 37.41 seconds. Here are his Lola Buick settings:



***Indy 500*, eh? What a game – quite simply, the most impressive 3D racing game ever (pre-*Formula One Grand Prix*, of course) and still, at budget price now, an excellent buy. To really do well at the game though, you'll be wanting this help...**

Fuel – 5 for a quick lap, 10 for qualifying
Wings – front 1 notch from top, the rear one on the top notch
Tyres – r. front medium, the rest soft
Stagger – +1.00 inch
Pressures – r. front 25 psi, r. rear 25 psi, l. rear 25 psi, l. front 27 psi
Shocks – all as stiff as possible
Cambers – r. front –0.5, r. rear +0.25, l. rear +1.0, l. front +0.25
Gears – 4th gear 3.40

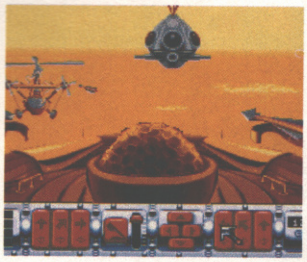
He also recommends pausing the game after the menu has appeared while making pit stops. You can still change the tyres and things, but all in under a second.

ACTION REPLAY POKES

Here're lots more pokes – great if you've got an Action Replay cartridge, of precious little use if you haven't. Now, let's go!

Action Fighter 193DC lives
Air Ace TFD 34AFC TFD 34AFA lives
Amegoids 1C327 lives
Apidya 7369 lives
Armalyte 4455 lives
Atomic Robokid TFD 276C lives
Bombuzal 1C137 lives
Chase HQ 2E7A8 time 29FCB turbos
Crazy Cars II 32F62 score
Crazy Sue 14CAF lives
Dan Dare III 249D3 lives 24E42 jets 24D30 plasma rifle
Deathtrap 2E3 player 1 lives
Dizzy Prince 16D lives
Downhill Challenge 324F9 warp drive
Dugger 4BDCB lives
Fed of Free Traders 4E2C7 missiles
Fernandez Must Die 84B lives 84D missiles
Frostbyte TFD 1E546 lives
Future Basketball 1E481 player 1 score 1E427 player 2 score 1E4D9 time
Gods 225 lives
Hawkeye EC9B lives
Ilyad 106D lives
Jim Power TFD 595 lives
Katakis 452E lives
Killing Game Show 2255 lives
Kwik Snax EA69 lives
Leander 7D03B lives
Mad Bomber 12C3E lives
Magic Pockets 179A credits
Mega lo Mania 17ED7 men
Mr Wobbly Leg 27FAF lives
Nebulus II C84F timer
Necronom 502E lives
Populous 2 C59855 money
Prehistorik C08311 energy C0830F lives
Project X C015B1 lives
Puggles 1C17B lives
Raid TFD 1BC7A TFD 1BC7C lives
Raid II 178E3 lives
Rainbow Islands TFD 11C6 credits
Return to Earth 2C90F cash
Robocop II TFD 8034 lives
R-Type II 1497F lives 149F3 credits
Silkworm 235 lives
Soldier of Light C113B7 lives
Spellbound Dizzy EA69 lives

***Storm Master* 1DD36 cash**


***Storm Master*: Earn yourself lots of lovely cash without working for it!**

Strider F9C5 lives FF01 health
STUN Runner 8DFD minutes
Turrican 7AB1 lives 7B1A mines 7B1E smart bombs
UN Squadron 6857 shields
Video Kid 3028E lives
Volfied C2CD87 lives C2CD88 shield
Wicked TFD 5C8 lives
Wings of Fury TFD 2E154 lives
Wolfchild TFD F36 smartbombs
Xenon II TFD CCA lives
X-Fire C26723 lives

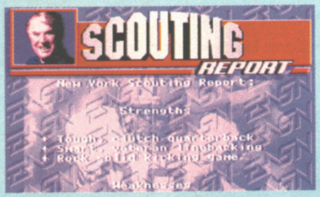
A big 'thanks' to Gareth Meney, Roland Corbet, Murat Halil, Gary Cole, Brian Nicholls, Andrew Gregory (aged 14) and Paul Bagnarol.

JOHN MA
AMERICAN

American football's still a bit of a minority sport, but it's a great one. There's no better way to get into it than playing EA's brilliant Amiga version either, but to get you started (and give you a fighting chance!) here's a helping hand...

What can we say about *John Madden American Football*? Well, it's undoubtedly the best American football game available for the Amiga. That's nothing too tricky, you might be thinking – its only real rival is the ancient *TV Sports Football*, after all – but if we were to tell you it's also one of the best sports games around of *any* sort, and an essential for any sport-loving game player, you might prick up your ears a bit. Unfortunately John Madden himself, one of the greatest coaches in grid iron history, proved unavailable to help us out with the tips, but here's the next best thing – AMIGA POWER's Matthew Squires and the boys from the EA offensive line up...

USING THE SCOUTING REPORT



New York Scouting Report:

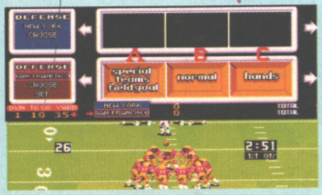
Strengths

+ Tough, clutch quarterback
+ Smart, veteran linebacking
+ Rock solid kicking game

Weaknesses

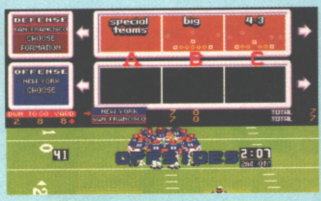
You can see from your scouting report that New York have a very strong offense. Use this knowledge to prepare your tactics against them in the game.

Don't forget, this is there for a purpose – it's a mistake to ignore it. Through it you'll discover the strengths and weaknesses of your team and its individual players, as well as those of your opponent. For example, your kickers are crucial for field goals, but some aren't as good as others. Some may even slip when their foot comes into contact with the ball! One way to try and make up for this is to always kick with maximum power when using an average or ropier kicker.



"Hey Joe, you sure you ain't wearing my jockstrap? Mine's awful small – I can hardly move!" Ah, the joys of the huddle!

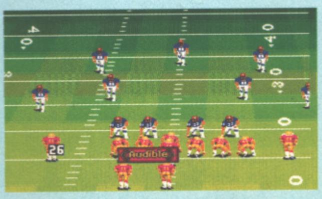
Then there's the huddle – the circle each team forms to discuss tactics before a play begins. Once you've chosen a play for your team, they'll face off against the opposition in the formation you've chosen along the line of scrimmage. There's a narrow neutral zone (measuring the width of a football!) between the two teams – an offside penalty (the offending team gets five yards deducted) will be called if either team enters this area before the ball is brought into play.



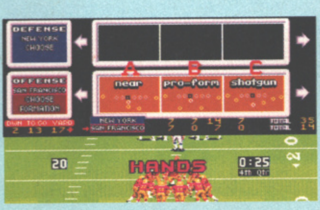
Don't jump the gun and enter the neutral zone before the ball is brought back into play – it's a pretty serious mistake to give away an offside penalty.

WHAT ON EARTH'S AN 'AUDIBLE'?

Okay, so you're both lined up facing each other on either side of the scrimmage. Your next task is to try and guess the other team's strategy from how they've placed their players – you may decide your own men are set up wrong as a result of this, and while you can't totally re-arrange things, you can make one of two last minute changes. You do this using (you guessed it) an 'audible' – this is a special pre-arranged play (it could be a trick offensive play or defensive rush) that the other team won't be expecting from your formation. What happens is the quarterback calls out a series of code words or numbers before the ball is snapped which alerts the team that a special play will replace the previous call.



Choosing a last minute audible could be the best way to launch an attack – 'cos now you know their defense formation!



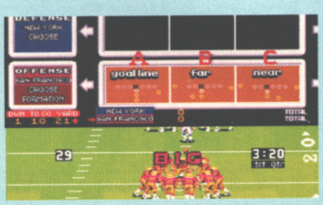
Choose HANDS and SHOTGUN to fake a 'long bomb'. Then choose your best running audible to surprise the bad guys.

As you may have guessed about such a useful tool, it's wise to call audibles as much as possible. For instance, you could select a deep passing play with a formation and set that will fool the computer into thinking you are attempting a 'long bomb' (example: HANDS and SHOTGUN), then choose the team's best running audible before the snap – this should leave the opposition completely wrong-footed.

PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS

Remember, your plays should always be designed to either exploit the strengths of your best players or expose the weaknesses of the defense – and preferably both. You've wasted an opportunity if you don't. (Having said that, it's often a lot easier to do this against the computer than a human opponent.)

A good example would be to select a formation and set to fool the computer into



Never miss an opportunity to exploit your strengths or the defense's weaknesses – that's what the game's all about.

THE AM
AMERIC

Though plenty of us spend our winter evenings stuck to Channel Four's Yankee football coverage, not everybody does. That being the case, we thought a quick (well, as quick as it's possible to manage) explanation of 'what it's all about' might be in order. Here we go...

For a start, each team has 11 men on the field at any one time. During a game there is an attacking team – called the 'offense' – and a defending team, the 'defense'(note that dreadful American spelling!) while the pitch is divided into two 50 yard halves. At each end of this pitch is an additional ten yard area known as the end zone. The aim of the

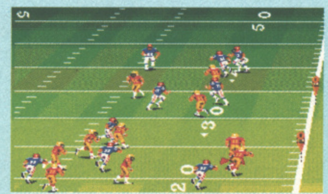
Yes! Here's your guy strutting like a peacock after scoring a touchdown.

DDEN FOOTBALL

thinking you're going for a running play, say BIG GOAL LINE, then, choosing the team's passing audible instead when you're at the line of scrimmage. Fools 'em (nearly) every time.

HOW TO HANDLE PLAYING OFFENSE

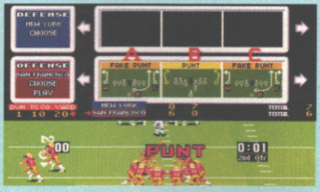
When you're playing in offensive mode and picked your play, your centre will snap the ball back to your quarterback. Your team must now move it towards the defense goal line. They have two ways in which to do this – the ball can be carried towards the goal line, known as a running play, or it can be thrown forward to another player. This is known as a passing play. If you're on a fourth down – and too far away to attempt a field goal – remember to use your passing skills. Passing is the key to winning a game quickly, but can also be your downfall if



We turned HANDS, SHOTGUN and FLOODRIGHT into an effective running play. Here our 49ers quarterback runs the length of the pitch for a touchdown.

your receivers aren't up to scratch.

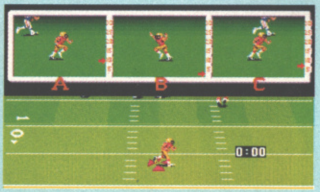
If you've got a team with good passing skills you can go for a fake punt – where your punter makes like he's going to kick, but at the last moment throws the ball to an open receiver or hands it to a fullback. Faking that you're going to try for a field goal and then getting a guy to run



There are a lot of ways to win in this game, but a simple fake hardly ever fails. Try the fake punt (as here) to really upset your opposition's defense!

with the ball instead is also pretty useful if you need the points, but only use them as a last resort – they're risky.

One thing passing always requires is concentration. Keep one eye on the receiver windows, making sure you select the appropriate guy (the receiver who is free or ahead of the defense is not always



To throw a successful pass, make sure you select your best receiver. Always be aware of the defense moving in on your receivers – don't allow an interception.

the best option). Always watch the distance meters.

When you're in a running play, or your receiver is running with the ball for a touchdown, a defensive player may be close to tackling you. To avoid the tackle, run upwards at an angle (up left or up right). As soon as the defense dives to →

AMIGA POWER GUIDE TO RICAN FOOTBALL

offense is to score points by moving the ball across the defense's goal line and into the end zone – this is known as a touchdown, and earns the offense six points – while the other team's defense will try to stop them.

As you may have noticed from watching American football, it's a very stop/start sort of game. Each time the ball is brought to rest on the pitch, the two teams line up against each other on either side of an imaginary line – the line of scrimmage – drawn across the pitch through the point where the ball hit the ground. An offense team has initially four attempts to move the ball from the line of scrimmage ten yards up field. Each attempt is known as a 'down', and will be called as the first down, second down, third down or fourth down. Success in moving the ball ten yards up field will win another series of four downs. Ultimately the aim is to score a touchdown.

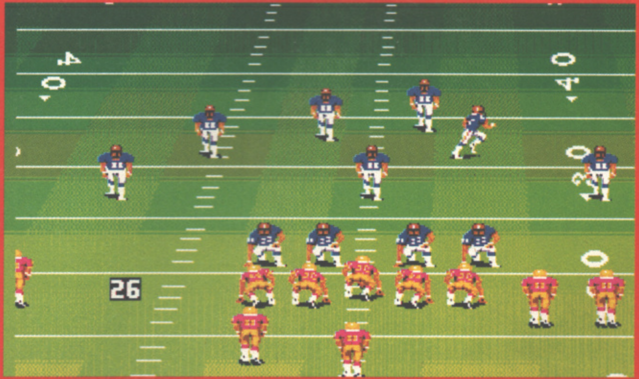
Those are the basics, but, of course, there's a lot more to it than that. The game's structure has it that you've got four downs to move the ball at least 10 yards nearer the defense goal line – if you manage this you get four more downs to give you a chance to get even further and maybe score, if you don't (or if you actually manage to score a touchdown) play passes to the other team. That team then becomes the offense, and they'll start to move the ball in the opposite direction. Play continues like this through four 15 minute quarters.

Let's describe a typical game to give you some idea of how it all works in practice.

PLAYING A TYPICAL GAME

The game begins with the visiting team kicking the ball from their 35 yard line towards the players of the home team. The home team then catch the ball and run with it towards their opponents' end zone. At the same time the kicking team go for the player who caught the ball and try to tackle him – when he's tackled or runs 'out of bounds' (leaving the field) play stops. The referee will then mark the spot at which this incident occurred – this is known as spotting the ball, and play resumes from here.

The team that kicked the ball is the defense, and the team that caught it is the offense. If the kick is caught in

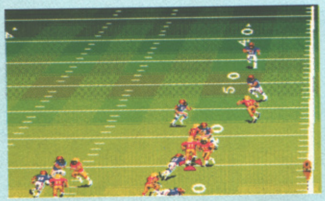


War zone – the line of scrimmage, where they don't just wear those helmets for show!

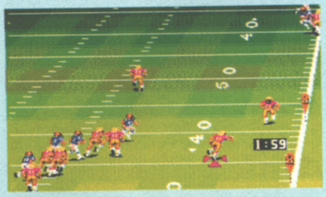
the end zone, the home team can touch the ball on the ground rather than run towards the centre line. Known as a touch back, this action automatically sets the line of scrimmage on the 20 yard line.

A touchdown is also followed by a kick off to restart the game. Practice hard at achieving an onside kick during kick off – that is, kicking the ball a short distance in an attempt to recover it on a fumble by the (hopefully hopeless) receiving team.

So now you're ready for the big game. Compose yourself, don't let anything distract your concentration – maybe even kit yourself up in Dad's old crash helmet (with some cricket pads around your shoulders, an old sweat shirt over the top and some coal streaks on your face, if you want to really get in the mood!) and let's play...



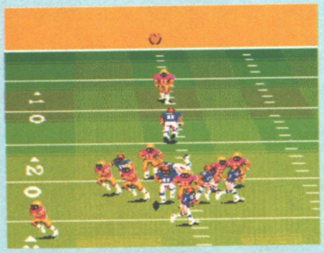
If the defense is close to tackling you, run upwards at an angle. When one of their guys dives for your legs, change direction.



Having problems with your offense? Then try HANDS for the set, SHOTGUN for your formation and POSTUP as the play.

tackle you, change your run to the opposite direction (example: if you're running up and left for example, change to up and right). For extra strength, hold down fire on the joystick.

However, there'll be times when you're about to be tackled and there'll be nothing you can do about it. If this is the case, try spinning. This will only work, however, in a one-on-one situation – any more of the other team about and you're likely to be cannon fodder.



On a fourth down, with desperation looming, try driving the opposition deep into their own territory with a punt.

On a fourth down – when you'll probably be quite desperate to get somewhere, as it's unlikely you're going to get the ten yards to earn a new first down – the offense can choose to punt the ball towards the opponent's goal line. If you want to do this, the punter – instead of the quarterback – will receive the ball from the snap. He then kicks it into the defense's half as if you were actually starting the whole thing with a kick off. The idea here is to drive the opposition deep, deep (deep) into their own territory, thus making it incredibly difficult for them to gain enough yardage to score when they eventually get their go at offense.

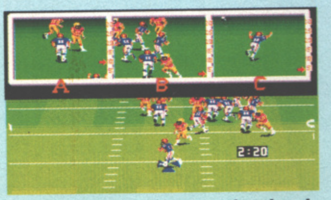
To make it even tougher for them, kick the ball as far as you can to the left or right – never straight – as they'll find it much harder to collect that way.

Last but not least, always (always! Always!) keep your eye on the game clock. Timing that all important clever play can make or break a game.

LEARNING TO MANAGE YOUR DEFENSE

As the defense team you will have two things in mind. First is to prevent the offense from gaining territory, making first downs, and scoring touchdowns. Your second goal is to take possession of the ball and become the offense yourself.

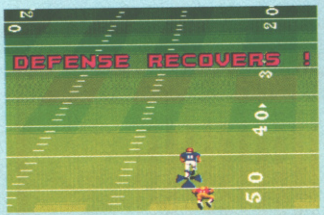
So how do you manage this? Well, through turnovers. There are a few ways to manage this. One, called a pass interception, is where, quite literally, you intercept an offense pass. The other is the fumble, where the offense accidentally drops the ball and one of your guys gets to pick it up first – if this happens he's considered to have taken possession of the ball and is free to run it toward the opposing team's goal line.



If your defense is going to get though and sack the quarterback, you must force a gap in the offensive line.

Here's another neat tip when playing defense: select a good strong formation, then manoeuvre a player from the centre zone to the line of scrimmage. Slip him into a gap between two men, which will force all your guys along a bit. The offensive team will then have to spread their guys out to compensate, but – having fewer in the line – there will be gaps between them. This often upsets the offensive line, giving you much more of a chance to get through them to sack the quarter back.

It may sound obvious, but whenever there're more than two of your defensive players near the ball, always use the opportunity to try and strip it away from the offensive team. If you're in defense playing against the computer (it doesn't always work with human opponents!) and it chooses a running play, do not tackle the ball carrier. Instead run in front of him – he will try to go around you, so block his change of direction. He'll respond by running backwards away from you – keep this up and you can push his yardage right the way back.



When the offense drop or fumble the ball, defense can pick it up, and take possession of the ball in a recovery.

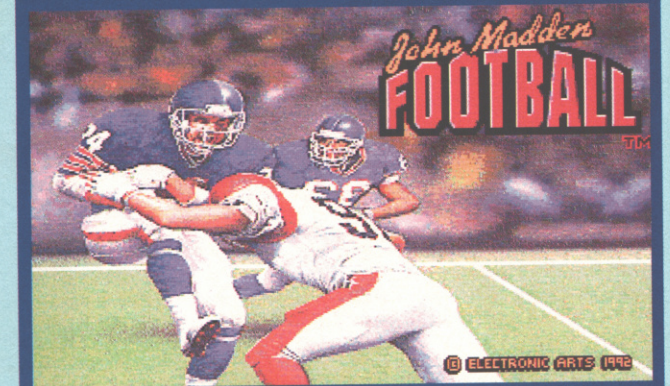
And that's basically it, game fans. For an all time favourite offensive play try HANDS, SHOTGUN and POSTUP.

AMIGA POWER PROGRAMMER'S CHALLENGE

The *John Madden* programmer Gary Roberts has issued this special challenge to all AMIGA POWER reading *John Madden* players. Can you score over 100 points against the computer, he asks, when the computer has control of the 'All Madden' team? You're allowed to play any team yourself, but it's not going to be easy – if you manage it you'll get to be what Gary describes as 'an ace player, and good enough to join the 'elite team of Electronic Arts *John Madden* playtesters.'

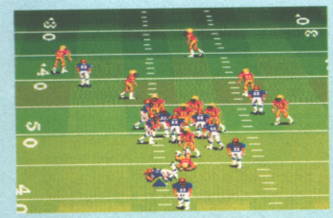
And as an additional challenge he offers this tricky little number: take Atlanta to the Super Sunday game – and win! Manage this and Gary will eat his hat!

Thanks for both the general *John Madden* tips and the special AMIGA POWER Challenge must go to Gary Roberts and Simon Jeffrey at EA – grid iron superstars both.



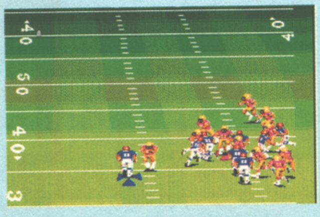
Crunch, Crack. ("Boy, am I glad Joe eventually gave me that jockstrap back!")

HANDS is a set. It will put the best group of receivers on the field, including two of your best running backs.



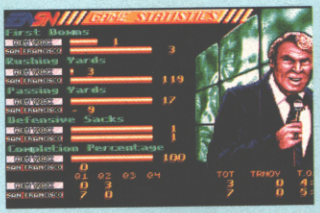
The result of a good defense move. The 49ers (in red) have burst through to splatter the New York quarterback.

SHOTGUN is the formation. It is basically a passing formation in which the quarterback receives the snap about five yards behind the line. The advantage here being that your quarterback is already in a position to throw the ball – so he doesn't have to drop back after the snap.



Don't tackle the ball carrier. Instead, run in front of him, then block his change of direction to push his yardage back.

POSTUP is the play – ideal for your faster players. The receiver will run downfield and then angle in towards the goal post. Providing that your quarterback doesn't throw a lame duck pass, and your receiver runs like the wind, such a play will score. We've found that both this and a DEEPOUTS play are very effective.



Use the stats screen – you can see exactly what you've been doing right and where your tactics have been going wrong.

For an all time favourite defensive play try 4–3 READ and WIDE ZONE 2. 4 – 3 is your formation. It is the standard four down linemen with three linebackers. It is the most effective tactic for short and medium zone pass coverage or basic defense against the run. READ is the set and gives you balanced coverage. With such a set your defense can react quickly to the pass or run. WIDE ZONE is the play and refers to a particular area of the field which must be covered. ●

MOONSTONE
(Mindscape)

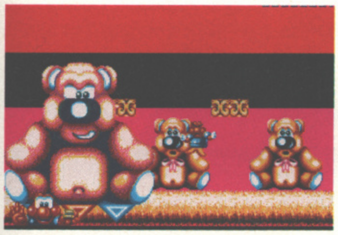
Stephen Brown of Warley has discovered not one, not two, but, er... two (oops) tips:

- When you enter Stonehenge, and you have to offer a magical item to Danu, click on Strength (STR) for an extra life. Do this as often as you like.
- Select the monster which you find the easiest to kill. Leave something in the treasure chest in its lair (gold or a scroll, for example) and keep on going back and attacking the monsters that appear. You'll get more experience points each time. Use these on your Constitution (CON) for extra hit points.

***Moonstone*: It all boils down to just picking the softest animal you can find, then bashing its head in. (If only tips to all games were this simple!)**

ROBOCOD
(Millennium)

Never mind infinite lives, here's a game that seems to have infinite cheats, and they're still coming thick and fast.



***Robocod* – half fish, half machine, all cute!**

James Watt of Pevensey reveals that, having typed in the LITTLE MERMAID cheat (as detailed in AP 12), you can type LITTLE M to bring up a level selector screen. Just type in a number between 1 and 50 and you'll be whisked directly to the relevant section of the game.

Jonathan Ashford of Windermere says that if you press W after extending Robocod's body he'll remain fixed at that height.

APIDYA
(Play Byte)

Here are some codes to type into the title screen:

SHOWCREDITS (plus Return)
for the end sequence and
MISSHONEYBEE
DEPUTYOFLOVE
SNEAKPREVIEW
for the various levels. Martin McGuire (who sent them in) has also discovered that typing HASTALAVISTA causes the game to ask for disk 2 and try to load something, but he's not quite sure what. Anyone got any clues?

Oh, and Justin Jonas of Sheringham reckons that holding the Help and Del keys will slow the game down by, ooh, about 50 percent.

***Apidya*: If at first you can't do it, cheat!**

JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER
(Virgin)

Paul Slater of Rotherham makes the following wild claim. After all the reds have gone you can choose which colour is potted next by pressing:

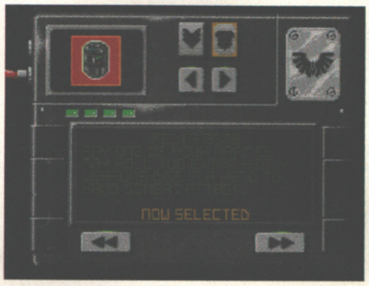
2 for yellow	3 for green	4 for brown
5 for blue	6 for pink	7 for black

***Jimmy White*: If you thought you couldn't have a snooker game cheat, you were wrong.**

SPACE CRUSADE
(Gremlin)

When you're being attacked, press the escape key repeatedly, advises David Pilgrim of Rochford.

This will reduce your attacker's score, inflicting less damage on your soldiers.



***Space Crusade*: How to avoid getting killed, the easy way.**

COVER GIRL POKER
(Emotional Pictures/The Sales Curve)

Bet money
Change cards
See your cards
Give up
FIFI
MARIA
Cover Girl
STRIP POKER

For titillation beyond your wildest dreams (Not!) here's a weird one.

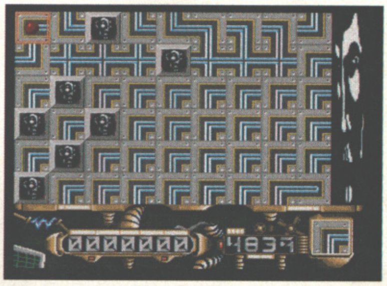
You see, raincoat wearing Waquas Naseem of Kilmarnock suggests typing 'DANCEOFTHESEVENVEILS' (without spaces). The scamp!

Oh dear oh dear. Deare dearie dear. Etc.

ROME
(AP Disk 12)

The four level codes, reveals Simon Hawes of Wokingham, are as follows:

Level 10 – Gemma
Level 20 – Carrie
Level 30 – Sam
Level 40 – Rachel



***Rome*: You saw it here first, now get the cheat too!**

MAD BOMBER
(AP Disk 13)

Press F5 while on the title screen to jump straight to level 13, says Dennis Wachtel who lives in Holland.

LIVES
SCORE

It's mad and – yes! – it's got bombs in it! (© Matt Bielby 1992).

DESPERATELY SEEKING TIPS

If the size of our mailbag is anything to go by, we've got a very large mailbag. But it needs filling up with tips, so get writing! C'mon – tips, maps, cheats and complete playing guides are what we're after, and the rewards are handsome. Namely, piles of scintillating software for the very best stuff we print each month. So, are you top of the tips? Find out by sending your outpourings to: Complete Control, AMIGA POWER, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

SHADOW

THE COMPLETE PLAYER'S GUIDE PART 2

Welcome to the second half of our giant player's guide to *Shadowlands*. It's not a complete solution as such – we don't tell you exactly how to do *everything* – but with a bit of inventive play added it should see you through with energy to spare. Our very own Matthew Squires hosts, with help from the boys at Domark...

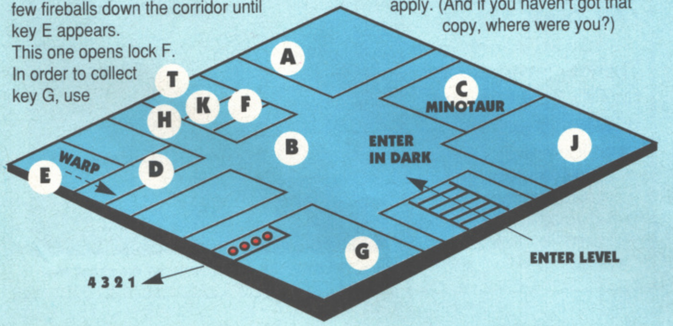
You'll remember we left you at the end of level 5 last month, hopefully with all your characters intact. Where better to start this second instalment, then, than with...

LEVEL 6

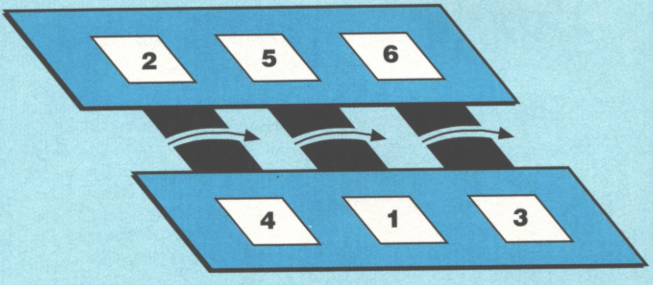
In this section of the game you'll find there are a number of keys and switches to be found which, when used, open doors elsewhere in the level. The simplified diagram below should help make your quest a little easier:

Switch A opens door B.
Key C, which can be found in the chest, opens door D.
Once you are through door D, throw a few fireballs down the corridor until key E appears.
This one opens lock F.
In order to collect key G, use the switch combination 2 – 4 – 3 –1 in quick succession to gain access to the room. Key G opens lock H.
Now collect key J, which opens lock K.
You will need an empty chest 'I am 1, act like 6'.
Exit this level via teleporter T.

Remember: as far as food, water, potions, equipment, or, indeed, any nasty creatures are concerned, the same general rules as detailed in last month's AMIGA POWER apply. (And if you haven't got that copy, where were you?)



LEVEL 8
THE EGYPTIAN LEVEL



Throw three coins at the fountain (or urn) at the end of the long corridor (past the sarcophagi). Come back to the double doors near the entrance and press the secret switch near them. Now press the next secret switch in order to enter the 'Zodiac Room'.

In the diagram above, to get the key you'll need to place two men on each pressure pad in the following order:

1. CAPRICORN
2. AQUARIUS
3. PISCES
4. AIRES
5. TAURUS
6. GEMINI

Simply use the pressure pads in the same order as in the Zodiac sequence.

Remember – your key collector can walk one step further each time a switch is activated without getting teleported.

Collect the key and go through the double doors. To solve the 'Sacrifice Puzzle', stand one figure holding no items at the end of the passage. Now have a second character throw a fireball at him. The fireball will explode inside the altar and the doors will open. Leave via this Exit.

Now fireball into the teleporter created by the secret switch with the sign 'Send an appropriate sacrifice'. But be careful – if you mistime the fireball, it will reappear behind you.

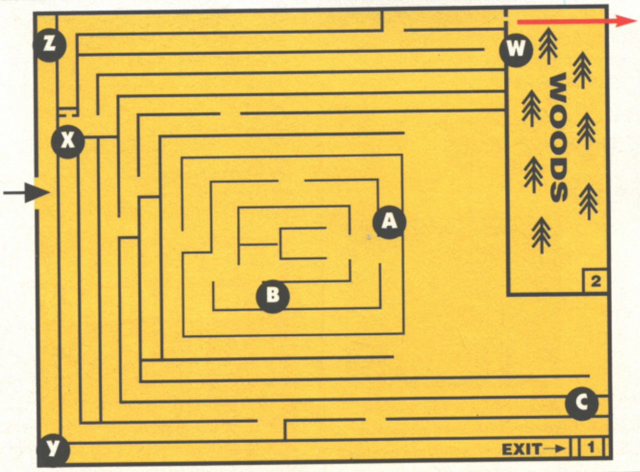
Next, walk the characters carefully

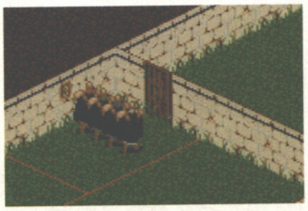
LEVEL 7
THE MAZE

Again, we'll set this out in the form of a map. The Maze – you'll probably find it's one of the toughest parts of the game, incidentally – would take you ages to find your way around otherwise.

Making your way around Level 7

In the above map, switch C opens wall Z, key A opens door Y, while Key B opens door X.
Lock W is opened by the key you'll find at the end of the Egyptian section of the game (level 8). You'll need to come through this part of the maze later on, so don't forget to collect the blooming thing once you get there.
Exit 2 will take you down into The Cave (level 12).





Here your four blokes are, in the maze, and they're lost. That's why you need this here map, you see, to get out. (Ahem.)

So, what you have to do in this level first time round is simple: collect keys A and B, open the wall with switch C and go through exit 1 to level 8.

Hurrah! You've now completed the maze, and – as the game is only 13 levels long – it's all downhill from here.

WLANDS

FRP, Egyptian style – send your guys through the teleport in the middle there.

around the pits (the switches do nothing), and push the secret switch in the alcove at the end of the passage (with snake and torch). Now enter the shop. Do not buy the third item. Exit the passage.

When you reach the sign 'Read the heiroglyphics', light all the decorated walls by walking around them. Eventually the keys you require will appear. All four keys must be collected in order to open the next series of rooms.

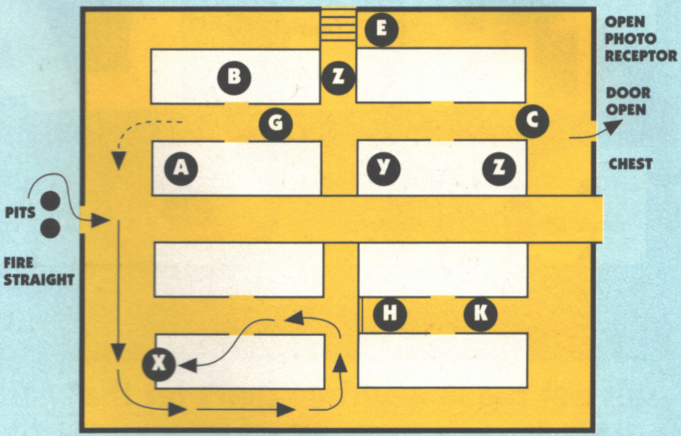
At 'Send me your champion', operate the three switches and send your best fighter through the door. Leave all his items behind ('Travel light') and walk him over to the switch. He will teleport beyond the axe.

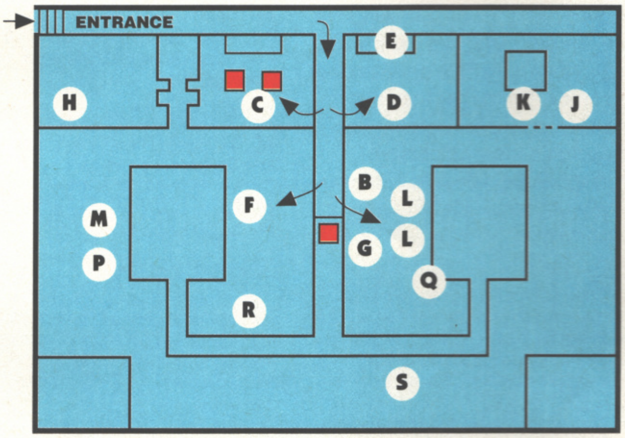
Now press the secret switch, enter the room and kill the minotaur using the torch. Collect the chest, which contains two keys – one will let you out. Kill the other minotaur also using the torch. Put the two spare keys in the two locks by the steps. This will create a teleporter back in the 'Send me your champion' room. Now reunite your characters via the teleporter and collect the chest in the secret room beyond the steps. Go down the steps into level 9.

LEVEL 9

Use the cheeseboard to copy the switch pattern. Now lead your men in formation – you'll need to in order to operate the four switches simultaneously. Throw a lit torch down into the pits to open the next doors ('Lightfalls'), then extinguish both torches to open the next doors. Throw a fireball into the rightmost teleporter to close the pit and open the wall, then go around to 'Fire Straight'. Throw a fireball straight over the pits – as it tells you – and eventually two teleporters will appear. Go into them and warp over the pits.

In the diagram to the right, read sign X. It will teleport you. Try and read all the signs you encounter as they can move you around. Read them in the following sequence (the > sign indicates you are going to be teleported): X > Y > Z > A > B.





LEVEL 10

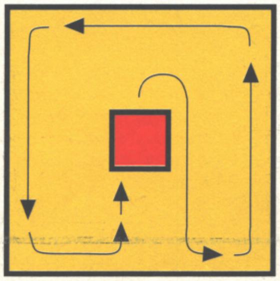
Here is another of those wonderful maps to make your quest easier. As far as switches are concerned in this level, your first task is to pull switch A. Then push secret switch B, which will open walls C and D. Open up and go through door D. Stand in corner E. This will open walls F and G.

Now, solve puzzle H: SWITCH > TELEPORTER > FIREBALL. This will open the doors at J. Go in and collect the chest, which contains key K. Use key K to open either locks L or M. To open locks P or Q collect either key R or S. Open the door. If you go via P you will need 2.5kg weight. If, however, you go via Q, you will need three gold coins, but no more. Kill the two anubises, collect the keys and exit into level 11.

LEVEL 11
THE GATEWAY

There are steps down into the ground hidden in the woods here.

Use all the Gateway keys you'll have collected, going from room to room until you get to the final teleporter. Once there, collect the Woodland key and enter the teleporter. You will reappear in the Maze (level 7). Open the Woodland door, but beware of fireballs from the minotaur. (You can trick him into launching a fireball when you're hiding behind a tree, which will cause the fireball explosion to ricochet back in his face.) Obviously you can use fireballs and spells of your own too. Find the steps at the end of the wood, which will take you down into the Cave, level 12.



LEVEL 12
THE CAVE

Go through this area in darkness to get to the teleporter at the end. However, it has to be said, the odds are against you down here, with countless fire-breathing ghouls and a herd of minotaurs roaming about. If you do succeed against the beasts, exit via the teleporter and reappear on level 13. Unfortunately this was where nearly all of our boys got picked off by the fire breathing ghouls, so only the warrior lived.

It's getting tougher now – in fact, only two of our guys have made it this far!

And by this stage there's only one guy left! Now there's just the final teleport to go.

LEVEL 13
THE TEMPLE

This is it, you've nearly completed the quest. There's just one last job left for you and your men. (That is, if you've got any left!) You've got to find the Overlord, a shady looking bloke in a cloak, and kill him.

He's dead, eh? Great, now collect his key, use it to get into the temple room... and that's it! You've done it. It's a bit of an anti-climax, you have to admit, but then by this point you've probably got so few men left, it's probably no bad thing anyway... ●

FRUSTRATED?

Then you need...

THE LAST RESORT

with Jonathan Davies

Spit out those aspirins! Don't let that game get on top of you! Why kick the bucket when you could be kicking ass? Let Jonathan Davies show you how...

Games, eh? One minute you're tripping along nicely, showing the bad guys what for and saving kingdoms left, right and centre, and the next you're completely thrown by some silly little problem that you can't for the life of you seem to crack. But rather than heave the whole lot out of the window and take up brass rubbing, why not write to me? As one of the profession's most celebrated games gurus (not!), it's my sincere hope that I'll be able help you out, either by simply 'knowing' the answer, or by eliciting it from our notoriously knowledgeable readership.

FANTASY WORLD DIZZY

Q "Where's the key to the lift controller that takes you to the dragon with the egg? How do you get over the spikes in the guarded hallway? What do you do with the rusty old pickaxe, the clump of leaves and the piece of rope? And are you supposed to do anything with the empty bottle after drinking the whisky?"
Stephen Prior, Spalding

A Crikey. Well, I think the key you want is in the church. Cover the spikes with the rug. The pickaxe is for getting through the rocks in the mine and the rope is for tackling the alligator. Oh, and forget about the leaves and the bottle, I should.

R-TYPE

Q "Please could you tell me the cheat mode?"
James Sampson, Weybridge

A All right. Type in your name as "SUMITA." for infinite lives.

OPERATION STEALTH

Q "I've been stuck for months. I've finished swimming and have bought a bracelet from the man on the beach. Now I can't do anything. I've tried walking through the hotel, and talking to the receptionist amd cleaning lady."
Stephen McCefferty, Vienna, Austria

A It's not really all that tricky. Press the lift button and go up to the second floor. Then take the stairs to the third floor, turn right and go through the last door. THEN it gets difficult.

CRUISE FOR A CORPSE

Q "I've interviewed Tom, Suzanne, Julio and Father Fab. I've got the key to the roll-top desk and the diamond necklace, the receipt, the thank-you note and the bishop's letter. Now what?"
Sam Jones, Bovingdon

A Have you opened the necklace? And have you checked out Suzanne's cabin? Don't forget that it's a good idea to talk to everyone about everything. (Plus, there's the complete solution in AP9.)

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

Q "How do you beat the Swordmaster?"
M Hammond, Maidenhead

A You'll need plenty of experience, so first get Captain Smirk to train you and then pick a few fights with any wandering pirates.

Q "I've given the monkey three bananas but he still won't follow me."
Mark Shipman, Leyton

A Er, the thing is, you see, you've got to give him all five.

LOOSE ENDS

Even Spartacus knew when he was beat, so I'll hang up my poncho and leave you to cast your eye over the following list of stranded readers. If you think you can help, please write in.

Q "I'm in the part of EYE OF THE BEHOLDER after you've collected the four wind horns and blown them in front of the wind coming from the entrance of the temple. The plaque reads "Faith is the key" and there are four levers in a square room, each of which opens a door. I can't work out the correct combination."
Rob

Q "I can't get past World 1 Level 4 of LEANDER. When I get into the cave, I can get the silver bow but I can't get out."
D McCrory, Sleaford

Q "In MAGICLAND DIZZY, how do you kill the rat down the well, how do you get the sword out of the rock, how do you wake Dozy, where do you find Daisy and Grandizzy and how do you get the jewel from behind the beast?"
Mattie Whittle, Dunmore East, Eire

Q "On INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE, we keep getting killed at the start of the first trial. Are we supposed to kneel, and if so, how?"
Dave and Deb, Barrow-in-Furness

Q "And I'm stuck in the tunnels under the library. There's a door in front of me and a row of skulls on a bench before me. I've discovered that if I push the skulls down five times the door will open slightly, but then closes again."
K McKay, Tamworth

Q "How do you get past your reflection at the end of Level 12 in PRINCE OF PERSIA?"
Jonathan Inns, Wirral

Q "How do you get out of the museum in THE SIMPSONS? After you've jumped over the flower pots and spikes there's something on the floor, but I don't know what to do next."
Craig Lowe, Beccles

Q "How do you build a colony on another planet in MILLENNIUM 2.2? I know SIOS ships are something to do with it, but I can't build one because the moon doesn't contain copper. The instructions are brief to say the least!"
MA Knoblett, Bedford

Q "I can't find the the trader on either world in ELVIRA THE ARCADE GAME. Please put me out of my misery."
David Rowell, Paignton

Q "In POLICE QUEST III, I've found the cocaine in the locker and told the captain, and got to the Bain's house, but can't work out what to do next."
James Milner-Walker, Petersfield

And that's as much as we've got room for. Remember the address – The Last Resort, AMIGA POWER, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BWQ.

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There's little excuse for this really. It's really got nothing to do with Amigas. But – hey! – it's summer. It's too hot to work in the office. It's too hot to play Amiga games. So we all went to the beach instead, and it made us happy.

Just for two pages, forget about the Amiga for a second and think about a few other things you really should be doing this summer. It's true, there've been a lot of great games released this summer, with more to come, but you can't sit indoors with your computer all the time. Why not, instead, go out and do some of the things covered on these pages? Remember, though, these are only our ideas, we're sure you can come up with lots of better ones yourself. Just have yourself some fun, that's the main thing...

SON OF THE BEACH

INVEST IN A HANDHELD!

You don't really want to be playing games on your Amiga when it's sunny outside.

No, you want to be out there yourself – but if you can keep playing games, well, so much the better. With that in mind, we recommend you get your hands on the next best thing to your Amiga – a handheld.

There are three of these nifty little portable video game consoles to chose from – Nintendo Game Boy, Sega Game Gear and Atari Lynx – at prices from £70 to £100, and games from £20. They all have their fans – many of us here prefer the Game Boy for it's small size, but this is our Amanda, and she's a dyed-in-the-wool Game Gear fan. "It's nicer to hold and it's in colour," she says. We don't care if you agree with her or not, but she's having fun here, and that's what counts.

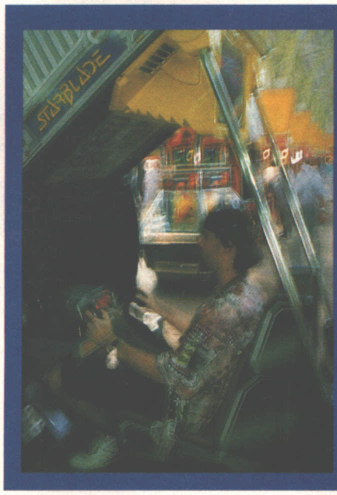
USE THE WATER!

In summer the only sports worth mentioning are watersports.

Make yourself a promise – this year you'll try a watersport you've never done before (even if it's only learning to swim). You won't regret it...

BEST OF THE SUMMER COIN-OPS!

There's only way to play video games when it's hot, and that's down the arcade. With that in mind, we sent Stuart Campbell off to check out the best of the summer coin-ops...



Yeeow! Either the hydraulics in this *Starblade* cabinet are wobbling it around so fast it's tricky getting a clear picture *(But there aren't any hydraulics in* Starblade *– Ed.)* or our photographer got so excited watching Mark he forgot to focus, or this is an 'arty' shot designed to show the sheer excitement of the arcade – whatever the truth might be, the boy Mark's having fun here, and that's what counts.

Meanwhile, Matthew gets his thrills in *World Grand Prix*, a one-player hydraulic motorbike game. Here's a funny story about Matthew and a motorbike actually (and this is *true*): once when he was riding a big bike in France he came across an articulated lorry which suddenly zoomed out in front of him, blocking the road. He braked, of course, the wheels skidded (maybe there was oil on the road or something) and he went right under the back of the truck and out the other side. True!

GO TO THE FAIR!

Do you really need us to tell you how much fun going to the fair can be?

No, of course you don't – and giant permanent sights like Blackpool Pleasure Beach or Alton Towers are even better than travelling fairs. Get a few pals together and make a day of it – we did (this ride is on the end of the pier at Weston Super Mare) and it was truly excellent...

Wheeeee! (I think I'm going to be ill!) (Not while you're sitting next to me you're not!) Pass the sick bag! (Etc.)

Here we are among the coin-ops. Things are getting bigger, brighter, flashier, faster, but when you really take a look at what's been happening with pay-as-you-play video games, as has been too often the case over the last few years, the answer's nothing new.

But that doesn't mean there's not some top entertainment to be had though, because many of the games that are being rehashed and brought up-to-date at the moment just happen to be some of the all-time classics, and at the top of the heap for us has to be Midway's *Total Carnage*. The sequel to *Smash TV* (which was in itself, of course, the sequel to the magnificent *Robotron 2084*), *Total Carnage* is a game so astoundingly bloodthirsty and violent that it manages the not-unimpressive task of making its predecessor look like a quiet night out with your grandmother.

Utterly over-the-top genocide is the order of the day here, with the main distinction between this and *Smash TV* being the fact that *Total Carnage* scrolls around *Mercs*-style, rather than being restricted to single screens at a time. This is also, as far as I can remember, the first arcade game ever to include level codes to save you from having to play the same areas over and over again – a highly commendable innovation. Secret rooms, sub-games, bonuses, liberal spashes of humour and all sorts of clever stuff abound, making this a game which bears more repeated playing than you might imagine, as long as you can stand the all-out assault on your senses.

Another seminal Williams coin-op to get the '90s treatment is *Defender*. The new version of that one – again produced by Midway – is known as *Strikeforce*, and it takes the basic defend-the-humanoids gameplay and really goes to town with it, slapping in all the power-ups, horrible aliens and dramatic backdrops you could wish for and turning what was already a frenetic and hideously challenging game into something truly awesome. Worth a few plays, for sure.

A bit too much for you? Well, how about something with a slightly more leisurely pace? *Star Wars*, for example? Step right this way, sir.

You see, Namco's *Starblade* plays in almost exactly the same way as the old vector-graphics movie game, with the machine flying you around and you merely moving your gunsight to blast squadrons of enemy spacecraft. Actually, thinking about it, under all the flash that really only makes it an *Operation Wolf* derivative, but don't worry about that – this is a game you really ought to see. Coming in a cockpit-shaped cabinet with a huge curved screen, *Starblade* boasts just about the most impressive coin-op graphics we've ever seen – enormous 3D filled vectors depicting alien cities, huge canyons, deep space sectors bristling with gigantic enemy cruisers and lots, lots more. The soundtrack is neat too, with crystal-clear speech telling you what to attack now and what's coming up next – listen to it, it's not just window-dressing. To be honest, the gameplay's a little on the simplistic side after a bit, but if you don't get a rush out of this one you must be dead.

And that's about it, really, as far as video coin-op kicks go. If you're completely tragically sad, you can always throw your money down the slots of *The Uncanny X-Men* (the latest identical-to-all-the-other-ones-since-*Teenage-Mutant-Ninja-Turtles* four-player beat-'em-up from Konami) or the still-amazingly-popular *Streetfighter 2* (now in a special 'Hampton Edition', whatever that means), but if you'd rather NOT see the arcade game industry nosedive into another five-year decline of rewriting the same two games over and over again (one tedious beat-'em-up and one dull scrolling shoot-'em-up with big monsters), then don't chuck any money into those machines. It's simple.

AND IF YOU'RE BORED OF THE VIDEO GAMES...

...you might just be lucky enough to find an arcade that features this little beauty.

If you think *Speedball II* is fast and furious in two player mode, just try your hand at air hockey – the simplest yet the best indoor two player action game around. Every arcade should have one. (Indeed, we'd probably go so far as to argue that every home should too...)

Gooaal! Matt chances his hand at Air Hockey.

And that's it – a pretty fair representation of how we're planning to spend (and, indeed, have been spending) our summer. Remember, it's not hot all year round, so make the most of it.

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Comprehensive virus detection and removal features to protect your software investment. Works with all presently known viruses.

NEW **BURST NIBBLER.** Now this super disk copier program is built into Action Replay Mk III. Just imagine a superfast, efficient disk copier program at the press of a key - no more waiting.

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Pictures and sound samples can be saved to disk. Files are saved directly in IFF format suitable for use with all the major graphic and music packages. Samples are displayed as screen waveform.

NEW **PAL or NTSC MODES SELECTABLE -** Useful for removing ugly borders when using NTSC software. (Works only with newer Agnus chips).

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Now you can slow down the action to your own pace. Easily adjustable from full speed to 20% speed. Ideal to help you through the tricky parts!

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Simply press any key and the program will continue where you left off.

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At the press of a key now you can view the Machine Status, including Fast Ram, Chip Ram, RamDisk, Drive Status, etc.

- **POWERFUL PICTURE EDITOR**

Now you can manipulate and search for screens throughout memory. Over 50 commands to edit the picture plus unique on screen status "overlay" shows all the information you could ever need to work on screens. No other product comes close to offering such dynamic screen handling of frozen programs!!

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With Sound Tracker you can find the complete music in programs , demos,etc. and save them to disk. Saves in format suitable for most track player programs. Works with loads of programs!!

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MORE
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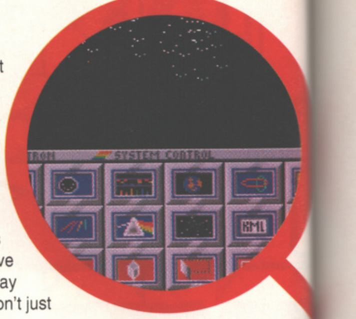
MORE
LEVELS
DATEL

IF I'D KNOWN THEN...

JEFF MINTER, eh? Legendary programmer, fierce supporter of the shareware concept, and outspoken software individualist, he's produced more Williams coin-op influenced blasters than any sane man ought to, brought sheep and similar 'nice, big, furry, good-natured beasts' to the Amiga in more acceptable ways than Peter Molyneux could dream of, and come up with some of the most bizarre game control systems of all time. We thought it was high time this software legend spoke to AMIGA POWER about what he's been doing all these years...

TRIP-A-TRON

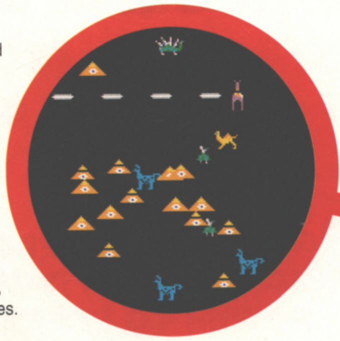
This wasn't actually a game but a light synthesiser, so I'm not sure if it should be in here or not. *(Oh, go on then – Ed.)* I didn't actually do the Amiga version of it myself – it was a guy called Andy Fowler, and I think he did an okay job. The reason I didn't do it myself was mainly because I just didn't have the time. That's all there is to say really, but at least it proves I don't just write shoot-'em-ups!



LLAMATRON

This one's my ultimate homage to Williams – and Eugene Jarvis, the creator of *Defender* and *Robotron*, in particular. I haven't met him, but apparently a copy of *Llamatron* got sent out to Williams in the States and they've been playing it. I don't know if Eugene Jarvis saw a copy, but I'd love it if he could give some of his opinions on my game.

That's all there is to say about this one really. I just wanted to take the idea of *Robotron* and do something with it. Why llamas? Well, I've been into them for years now. They're such nice, big, furry, good natured beasts, with nice big faces. Don't you like them?



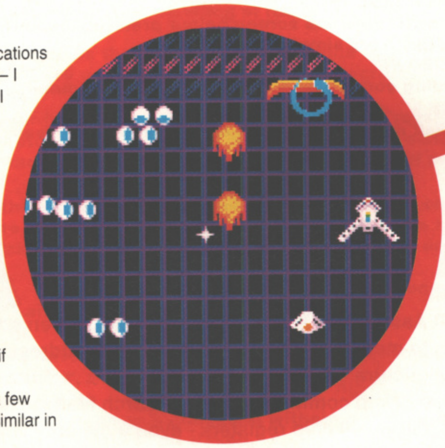
SUPER GRIDRUNNER

The Amiga version of *Super Gridrunner* is essentially the same as the ST one, but with a few modifications so people didn't think I'd been completely lazy and just ported it across. The play area's a bit bigger – I thought I'd better use the bottom 56 lines of the Amiga screen – and I did the sprites with the blitter. I always feel really guilty if I don't think I'm giving good value for money, which is why I bothered with the modifications. The only thing the game doesn't have which it really should is sampled sound, but at the time I didn't have a program written to do that.

Of course, *Super Gridrunner* is based on the original Vic 20 and C64 game from 1982, which was intended to be like a harder version of the even earlier *Centipede*. I wanted to get rid of all the cuteness and just make it tough, but at the same time I was keen to try out an unusual control method. One thing this did was make it possible to have things like the detachable nose cone which you couldn't do if you were using a joystick normally – there just aren't enough controls.

Something that isn't in *Super Gridrunner* but which I now put in all my games, and would like to have had in this one, is an 'assist' mode. That's when the computer takes over as an intelligent second player – as in *Llamatron* and *Revenge* – which gives it a funny sort of half demo/half game quality. It allows you to get into what can be quite intimidating looking games by holding your hand, if you like – then, once your confidence is up, you can just switch it off.

Just about everybody was playing *Llamatron* last year, and I think the idea has rubbed off on a few people too – certainly The Bitmap Brothers are talking about having something which sounds very similar in *The Chaos Engine*, which I'm very happy about.

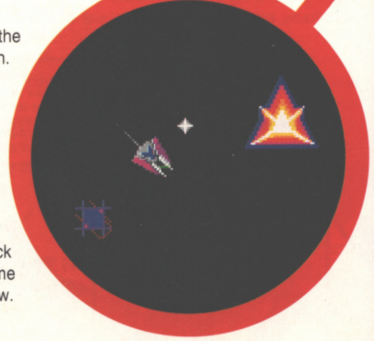


PHOTON STORM

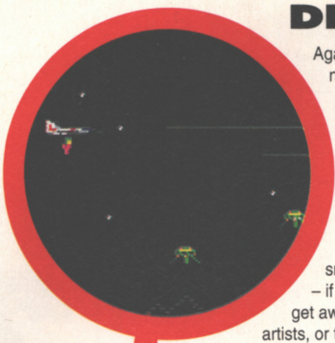
Like nearly all my recent stuff, this one was developed on the ST first, but oddly enough it was the game's publishers, Arc, *(Atari's own software label – Ed.)* who got me to write an Amiga version. A bit of irony there.

As fans of old coin-ops will know, the game is loosely based on William's *Sinistar* machine. Actually, it'd be more accurate to say it was 'influenced' by the arcade machine, because there's nothing about it that's exactly the same. What I wanted to do was a multi-directionally scrolling game with a mouse control – the sort of control the game needed couldn't really be done using a normal joystick. If you remember *Sinistar*, it had a special greater-than-eight-way-moving joystick, and the mouse was really the nearest I could get to it.

When people complain about the controls on some of my games, I think it's often because they're just too lazy to learn something new. They're used to simply moving the joystick left and right, and it can be hard to persuade people to give something else a proper try. With me it's the opposite – many of my favourite games are ones that force me to master something new.



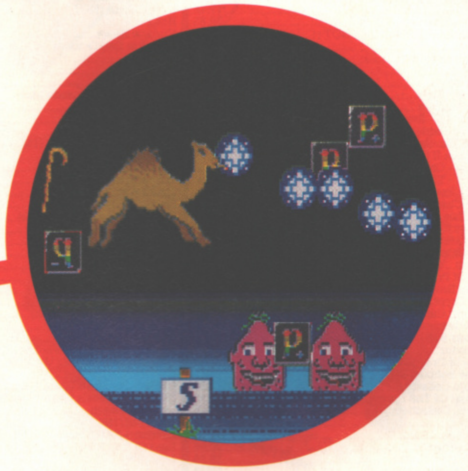
DEFENDER II



Again done for Arc, and it's not too hard to see where the influence for the game came from! What was nice about it was it allowed me to do decent versions of *Defender* and *Stargate*, two of my favourite games, for the Amiga.

That said though, because this was developed for the ST first there are a few things about the Amiga version which are less than ideal. The minimalist graphic style is there because the first thing a *Defender* game has to be is fast and smooth, and the ST couldn't cope with moving much more around the screen and remaining so – for the Amiga version we could probably have put some more complicated graphics in. The other thing I'd do to this one now is make it a bit easier – as it stands it's too hard for many people to see the later levels.

Actually, having said that about the graphics, I think these are pretty good – the space ships are small, sure, but they've got a lot of detail on them. They're certainly better than the sort of thing I can do – if you're doing a serious commercial release these days you really need a good artist, though I can still get away with my stuff on the shareware games. I wouldn't mind working with some of the Psygnosis graphic artists, or the guy who did *Project X. (For Team 17 – Ed.)* I really liked the subtle parallax shading on that one.

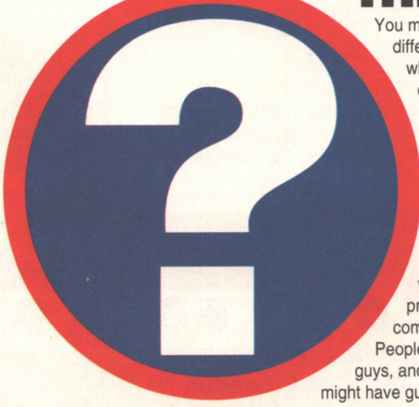


REVENGE OF THE MUTANT CAMELS

It was about the end of '83 when I did the original version, and the new 16-bits ones were done more or less as a response to popular pressure. People tend to write to me asking when there'll be a 16-bit version of this or that game, and *Mutant Camels* was one of the ones they asked for most. People also seem to like *Sheep In Space* a lot too, so it's possible I might update that one at some point.

With the new *Mutant Camels* it took me about three months to do the ST version and another month on top of that to get the Amiga one as I want it. The biggest difference was with the Amiga scrolling – otherwise it's much the same game.

THE FUTURE



You might see a few more shoot-'em-ups from me! That's not to say they won't all be quite different from each other though – as I said, I like games which have an unusual control system which takes a bit of time to learn. I think you get more fun out of the game that way, and it's certainly more satisfying to really master it. I may also bring a few more of my most popular old games to the Amiga as shareware.

As far as commercial stuff is concerned, I'm doing a new sort of *Super Llamatron* job for another big computer company – I guess they're the enemy as far as you're concerned. *(I think he means he's doing something for Arc to appear on the ST – Ed.)* It's a great game actually – you control four guns around the edge of the screen, and you use them to shoot at a puck in the middle to make it move about. The puck kills things as it hits them.

The problem with me doing what I call commercial games for 'real' software houses is that I feel guilty at the idea of charging more money than I think one of my game's is really worth, and as I think nearly all commerical games are really over-priced, that causes problems. The other thing is that I hate games that feel like they've been designed by committee, and that tends to happen all too often – I like to see an individual behind them. People like Andrew Braybrook, Geoff Crammond, Tony Crowther, Archer Maclean – they're all top guys, and produce the sort of games I like to play. And I also like Eugene Jarvis games, but you might have guessed that by now...

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AMIGA FORMAT ISSUE 36 - IT'S WAITING FOR YOU AT THE NEWSAGENT NOW!

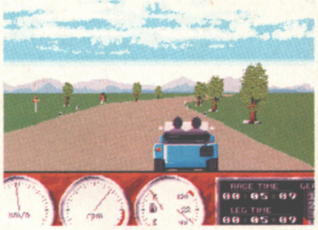
GAME REVIEWS CONTINUED

Games-wise, this has been a most spectacular month so far, and it's not over yet. Join us for the also-rans...

MILLE MIGLIA

Publisher: Simulmondo
Price: £25.99
Authors: Gaetano Dalboni, Mario Savoia and others
Release: Out now

One glance at the rather nice 1930s-style box artwork will tell you that this is anything but your standard rolling road driving game. Despite using the basics of a game style that's seen service in everything from *Out Run* to *Lotus 2* to this month's *Jaguar XJ220*, it's not an arcade game, not really. Instead, it would seem to be aimed at the more (ahem) mature individual who enjoys magazines like Classic & Sportscar and probably keeps a wire-wheeled MGB in the garage for summer weekend use only. The people who buy this won't care that it's far slower than nearly any comparable driving game (which it is) or that it lacks such niceties as varied road traffic, great scenery variation and so on (which is does), but will worry instead about its historical authenticity, sense of atmosphere and technical accuracy. So let's take a look at those areas, shall we?



Old car lovers will be in their element, but for the rest of us *Mille Miglia* just seems slow, stilted, and very, very foreign.

Erm, this is going to be pretty tricky, actually. Despite the fact that I do quite like my old cars, I can't in all honesty tell you whether an 'Alfa Romeo RL Super Sport' ever really existed or not, and certainly not whether it was any faster than an 'OM 665 "Superba" 2000'. Equally, I don't know if drivers like 'Tazio Nuvolari' were really around either, which puts me in a bit of a quandry. Let's just assume that it's all true – in which case the game scores heavily for historical accuracy – and move onto the rest of it, shall we?

Unfortunately that means mentioning a few of the game's problems, and it has some. Not, let me hasten to add, that I'm going to have a go at Mille Miglia for its lack of speed thrills (the manual states that 'the sensation you'll experience will not be of pure speed alone', and it's not wrong) – I think it's fine to have a slow sort of driving game, as long as you substitute the lack of speed with something else. And this, as far as I can tell, is something it doesn't do – as it is, you get the feeling that the game's alright, but very hard to get excited about. There are also problems with its logic. Let me explain:

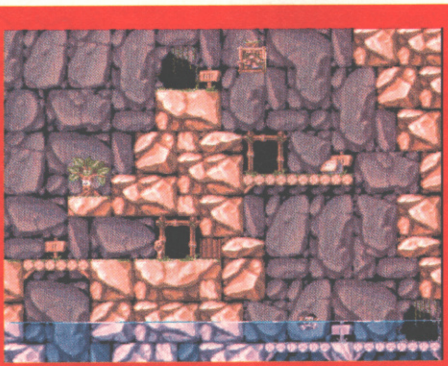
The real Mille Miglia, you see, was a 1000 mile road race, taking place in stages around Italy (Mille Miglia means '1000 miles'), so the game is split into stages (some are Italian country roads, some snow-covered mountain paths and so on) with a nice digitised picture of the correct Italian city to reward you as you pull into it. Before you set off you're given a choice of spare items to take with you, and these are apparently all-important – there was no back up to speak of in the Mille Miglia, no pit crews to change tyres, and if you couldn't repair whatever damage you might do to the car yourself, chances are you were out of the race.

This being the case, the game punctuates the driving action at annoyingly regular intervals with a 'Trouble Screen', which tells you what's gone wrong with the car and how much time you've lost fixing it. It's a reasonable idea in theory, but once I started playing it soon became incredibly annoying. Every 40 seconds or so the race would freeze, the game would

UGH!

A caveman taxi-service? Now *there's* an idea for a game...!

Publisher: Play Byte
Price: £25.99
Authors: Thomas Klinger & Björn Roy (programming), Rudolf Stember (music)
Release: July



Taxi work, prehistoric-style. As our hero flies around, the water level begins to rise in the world of *Ugh!* The small thing bobbing around in the water is actually a poor passenger who's accidentally been knocked over!

Dumber than dumb isn't necessarily such a bad thing – take *Ugh!* for example. The concept's incredibly simple, and not a little old fashioned – it's the sort of game which probably could've been conceived over a good strong cup of tea, then knocked out using AMOS in a week or two – and yet it's got a certain something.

Look, can I just get straight to the point? I love games which have simultaneous two-player options. I'd much rather play a computer game with, or against, someone else than sit around with only the Amiga for company. And while *Ugh!* makes *Asteroids* look like a NASA mission simulation in terms of complexity, it's got cute appeal, play-and-learn controls (there's plenty of inertia and gravity here – the things which made the coin-op *Joust* such a masterpiece), and a simultaneous two-player mode going for it.

The cute appeal mainly comes from a Flintstones-esque prehistoric man scenario, based around that age-old profession – the taxi service. Added problems with floods and various unfriendly dinosaur types complicate things a tad – to the point where it all reaches Pythonesque proportions of silliness, in fact – but the basic game is very simple indeed.

So how exactly does it work? Well, each player (it is possible to play solo, but that's not really what it's all about) controls a little crate with a rotor blade mounted on top. The mission is simple – cavemen (and cave-babes and cave-OAPS, come to that) will walk out one of a number of on-screen caves, hail a taxi (you) with a speech bubble, and tell you a destination. The player must then swoop down and land (taking care to miss the passenger!) nearby, he or she'll then climb aboard, and it's off to the required cave. Each cave has a handy little number posted on a sign outside, so there's no guesswork about where anyone wants to go. Complete several taxi runs, and it's onto a more complicated screen.

That's not quite it though. While all this taxi palaver is going on there's a grub meter slowly but surely decreasing at the bottom of the screen. If this gets to zero it's a life lost, but the problem is easily remedied by picking up a rock, dropping it onto a palm tree, and collecting the fruit it then desposits. (Logical, huh?) Later screens offer more complex cave layouts, the introduction of various dinosaurs (the breathing of some is enough to buffet your crate!) and the added danger of a rising water level. (It is possible to fly the taxis underwater, but, being light, they pop to the surface very quickly).

This stuff is all just so much fancy dressing, however – the root of the game lies in the inertia-overload control system, as it does in games like *Thrust, Asteroids* et al. Gravity constantly conspires against the airborne taxis, any over compensation with the joystick easily sending your fragile crate hurtling into a nearby rock. It's this that makes the game.

Good fun then, but if you suspect it of being rather slight, well, you're right. There's just not enough variation from level to level to keep the interest up for any great length of time, and I doubt the-fly-around-collecting-passengers concept is really the sort of thing classic games are made of. Fun, then, but a little too lightweight for the price.

● *MARK RAMSHAW*

THE BOTTOM LINE

A laugh and a half, *Ugh!* offers excellent (one or) two-player fun, for a while at least. Not the sort of thing you'll still be playing next year, though.

79 PERCENT

load the message that I'd jammed the wheel and that it'd take around 15 minutes to fix, then put me back into the action where I'd left off – all for no apparent reason at all. Drive off the road, through a house and two trees then back onto the road again and sometimes the game wouldn't mind at all – but pootle along perfectly safely in the middle of the road for a while and, uh oh, it's buckled wheel time again.

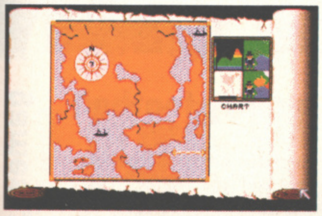
Um, so what's the conclusion? Well, if you like fast driving games, don't apply. If you like adult race strategy type things tread warily – I don't fully trust the stats and logic in it. If, however, you're an Amiga owning '30s car fan with a very low frustration threshold, this could be the game for you. Yes, both of you.

● *MATT BIELBY*

THE BOTTOM LINE
Slow, old fashioned driving game dressed up in historical authenticity. Great for fans of slow old cars, of dubious worth for the rest of us.
53 PERCENT

DISCOVERY

Publisher: Impressions
Price: £29.99
Author: David Lester & co
Release: Out now



***Discovery*: if you're into old sailing ships you'll be into this. For the rest of us, however, it's hard to keep the interest up.**

What is it with all these 'maritime exploration' games, I wondered as I unfolded yet another battered-looking chart of the high seas, and why do I have to review them all? Then I remembered: this year's the 500th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America, and everybody hates me.

So, what better way to celebrate the discovery of the New World than by, er, discovering the New World? (Or one of five alternative worlds thoughtfully provided for when the first one gets too overrun with hamburger restaurants and rap 'artists'.) This is done by sending ships out into the unknown and waiting for them to encounter land. Their crews then disembark and start building settlements. Of course, you're not alone out there – four other powers are vying for the same goal, and conflicts (both sea and land-based) are inevitable.

This could all have been horribly boring, but (surprisingly) it isn't. The graphics are a big help. While not exactly breathtaking, they're extensively animated and I particularly liked the 'ship sailing →

With a name like that he just has to be a star, doesn't he?

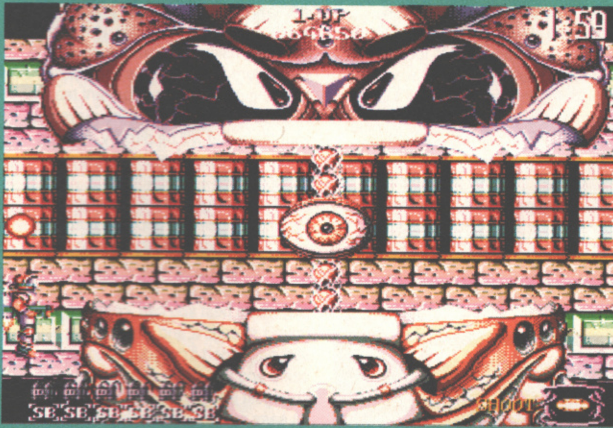
JIM POWER

Publisher: Loriciel
Price: £25.99
Authors: Digital Concept
Release: Out now

Jim Power, eh? Sounds like some kind of new super-hero, doesn't it, or maybe a super-efficient games reviewer. You know, the type who could possibly host the tips pages (move over Jonathan), or maybe the letters... *(Now wait a minute – Ed.)* Then again, it would be just my luck if he turned out only to be a lousy old game hero instead...

And that's exactly what he turns out to be – though less of the lousy, surprisingly enough. While it's true that Loriciel haven't always fared too well in these pages of late (who could forget the so-so *Baby Jo*, the average *Builderland*, the frankly hopeless *Steve McQueen* and the rest), *Jim Power* looks to be a bit of a turning point. While by no means a classic, it is one of those games that proves more or less impossible to dislike, and one that bodes well for the future – especially when the future would seem to contain products as exciting as *Entity* (see the speical preview in our new Things To Come section this month).

But back to *Jim Power*. The gist of the game is to go from left to right (the screen scrolling right to left, you know the drill) through a series of platform sections, shoot-'em-up sections, and end-of-level guardian sections (each successive one with an increased amount of shooting in it), killing everything in sight. Looking rather like *Turrican*, but playing more like *Rolling Thunder*, it puts the player in charge of a cool little dude with a baseball cap and meaty looking gun, who (for the shoot-'em-up sections) can don a rocket pack and take to the skies. He's also got a limited number of smart bombs – which is just as well, because there're 250 screens of game to battle through.



***Jim Power*: Whatta guy, eh? Kind of an armour-free *Turrican*, but with a better name!**

The first thing which you notice about *Jim Power* is how everything moves so wonderfully smoothly, in a multi-layer parallax kind of way. Each level comes complete with thoughtfully designed level layouts and traps, giant end-of-level guardians to send a shiver up the old spine, and a generally professional feel. It's not, however, a perfect game, and here are some reasons why:

1) The control method takes far too long to learn. It's almost impossible to move and shoot at the same time, and for the first 10 minutes I found myself losing life after life because of it. (Mid-jump control is also pretty minimal, but for some reason, it doesn't irritate too much.) A few hundred lives into the game you may find the control becomes a close, intimate friend, but it'll take some getting used to...

2) It's dull (at best) sonically. True, things aren't entirely unpleasant (the spot FX and samples work better than the music), but we're pretty much in McDonald's territory (ie they're no great shakes) here.

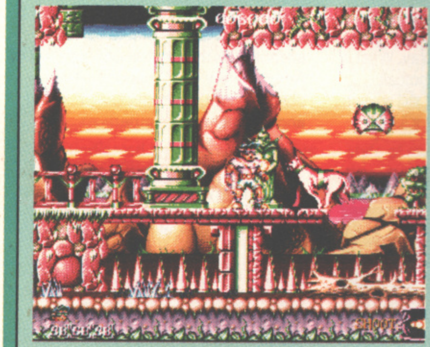
3) Okay, the visuals. Apart from the pretty crappy first level, the major drag with *Jim Power* is the iffy colour palette used to such average effect. It's a shame, when you've got all those nicely drawn graphics and smooth parallax scrolling, that the foreground colours look like the monitor's just been kicked in the RGBs. The problem is worsened by the fact that the sprites are also composed of the same blend of black, green, white and red. (It's a colour scheme Jim, but not as we know it...)

Still, good game design more than makes up for these lapses of presentation. This is one game that definitely has that 'just one more go' factor, largely due to the fact that every life lost is entirely down to playing incompetence – there's no 'unfair death syndrome' on view here.

Jim Power, then, is one of those toasted marshmallow sort of experiences. It's kind of sweet, rather tasty and mildly addictive, and while it won't change the state of your tastebuds forever, you'll have a pleasant warm feeling inside for a good while afterwards.

● *MARK RAMSHAW*

IT'S A PLATFORMER JIM, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT



One of the neat things about *Jim Power* is the way it combines scrolling platform levels with shoot-'em-up levels and end-of-level guardians. Here we see Jim using his power in level one. In addition to various knights, there're also these dogs to be faced, and several thousand spikes. Shooting at that helmet-like object hanging in the air will yield some extra energy and points.

THE BOTTOM LINE
No ground breaker, but a smooth and silky (if slightly gaudy) platform shoot-'em-up effort – what it lacks in originality it more than makes up for in evidence of sheer effort and good design. Not at all bad.
78 PERCENT

over the horizon' effect. The other major plus is that the game plays itself until you intervene, so it's not constantly hanging around waiting for trivial input from you. (This is the same approach *Dreadnoughts* used last month, and the only sensible way to go about things if you ask me.)

The problem is the user interface isn't up to much. The cursor moves around all jerkily, and the menu system feels disjointed and cumbersome. And while the icons are quite pretty, I had to look them all up in the manual to work out what they did (thus defeating their object). It's quite a nice manual, though, with plenty of background info on our man Columbus.

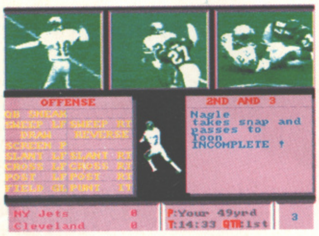
So what's the verdict then? Well, while *Discovery* certainly isn't up there with *Powermonger* or *Mega lo Mania*, compared to the sort of thing I usually have to put up with it's a breath of fresh air. A 'sea breeze'.

● ***JONATHAN DAVIES***

THE BOTTOM LINE
Quite a few numbers knocking around, but it's playable enough to compensate. Just the job if you're planning some sort of Amiga-based Columbus anniversary celebration.
75 PERCENT

TOUCHDOWN

Publisher: Strike Force Design
Price: £14.99
Author: In house
Release: Out now



***Touchdown*: Nice looking graphics, but the underlying management stuff is fairly weak. A shame – for Neil W, anyway.**

What's this? Another (mail order only) american football coaching sim swaggering onto the Amiga gridiron? Last month's readers will remember my review of the essentially identical *American Football Coach*, a game that fumbled the ball in its attempt to reproduce the ups and downs of the NFL. This month's offering is a slicker, more professional package (complete with sampled speech and digitised action stills), and – as there's surely only room for one american football management game in this country – looks likely to eclipse the earlier offering totally. Or not?

Unfortunately things aren't quite so cut and dried. In some ways this package offers more, in others less. To be concise (for some strange reason the rest of the AP team have yet to be convinced of american footballs' page worthiness – Philistines! – so I'll have to be brief), *Touchdown* offers very little hands-on, real-time decision making. Your playbooks are severely limited (14 offensive and 10 defensive plays), so the emphasis is strongly placed on pre- and post-game analysis and backroom coaching.

The chance of each play's success is calculated with ruthless statistical efficiency, based on a play's default likelihood of success (large gain plays are obviously riskier than short rushes) and then tailored (before the snap) by the following criteria: your opponent team's choice of play, the skill of the players in your team that will be directly involved in the play (you get marks out of a hundred here – yes!) and (correspondingly), the skills of your opponent's relevant opposite numbers.

So, deciding which plays to base your offensive and defensive strategies on is best done before kick off. Train up your players as best you can, compare your team's strengths and weaknesses with the scouting report from your opponent's camp and see which plays place your strongest jocks against their weediest. It's as easy as that. Obviously you'll have to break up the plays throughout the game, but you'll already know which ones you're going to rely on.

The results of all this planning and tactical play calling is displayed immediately (if a receiver catches a ball or a running play is successful then the gain in yardage pleasingly clicks up, pinball style) with the aid of pretty but ultimately superficial (after your first game you'll ignore them) digitised stills. Every now and then a sampled voice shouts 'Touchdown!', but then it's heads down for the next play.

That's not quite all though. Between matches there are other coaching decisions to be made too – including scouting for new team talent. As seasons come and go, players grow old and college rookies come up for grabs. You can painstakingly tweak and tailor (or completely replace!) your team as you see fit by introducing this new blood, though an easier way to victory is simply to elect to coach one of the better NFL teams to start off with. (This is a neat way the game gets around the problem of difficulty tuning, actually. The potential for different difficulties of game is sort of built in.)

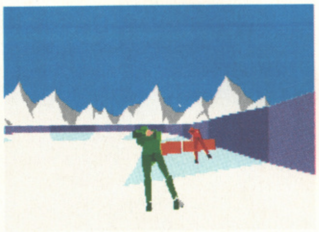
So is the game any good? Well, yes – it is in a inconsequential kind of way. There's nothing here to get really excited about, but because the presentation is so slick, it's both easy and fun to play. What it isn't is the definitive american football coaching sim – looks like we're still waiting for that, and (sad to say) I think it'll be a fairly long wait too.

● ***NEIL WEST***

THE BOTTOM LINE
Slick presentation keeps up the pace of a technically sound, if uninspired, coaching sim. All the basic features you expect are here, but gridiron fans deserve more hands-on action and a little more to excite the imagination.
48 PERCENT

WINTER SUPERSPORTS 92

Publisher: Flair
Price: £25.99
Author: Chris Robson & Peter Johnson (coding), Kevin Preston & Paul Drummond (visuals), Phillip Nixon (visuals & music)
Release: Out now



The bale jumping skater's movements are believable, but it's all very easy to play.

This is a collection of simulated sporting events set in a chilly clime and very much in the mould of the Epyx '*Games*' series, if any of you remember that. There's Downhill Skiing, Bale Jumping, Bobsled, Giant Slalom, Speed Skating, Pro Ski Challenge and Skidoo Racing to try your hand at, but if you think that makes eight different events in total (and I can see how you would) you'd be wrong. In fact there are only four.

How so? Well, the Bale Jumping and Speed Skating differ only because the former has a single row of hay bales to jump on its circular course, while the Bobsled and Luge are pretty much one and the same too, save for the modes of transport used to hurtle down the runs. There's more that these four events share too – they're all built as polygon block constructions. And it's to good effect too, though it must be said that in each case the racing action isn't racy enough.

As for the remaining events, these are presented in a more 'traditional' manner – that's to say, sprites and bitmap backdrops are used. That doesn't make the games any more individual, however. The three skiing events – reminiscent of the one seen in Epyx's *Winter Games* in many ways – are basically variations on the same thing, a selection of different courses where the player must dodge flags, leaving the Skidoo as the lone individual of the bunch, a real drop out

EUROPEAN

In a packed field of quality football games, you've got to be a

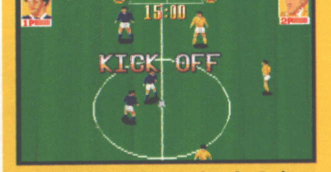
Publisher: Domark
Price: £24.99
Author: Teque
Release: Out now

Of the seven different footy games clamouring for your support this summer, Domark's *Euro Football Champ* is the chirpy, rather silly Gazza of the bunch. A comedy referee, diving headers, back heels and over-the-head bicycle kicks give a good indication of the game's roots – a high-speed, ever-so-sightly tongue in cheek Taito coin-op. Domark haven't released a comedy single to accompany their entrance into the Amiga's very own summer soccer play-offs (yet), but with the standard and number of computerised contestants at an all-time high, they might just find they need one to get noticed.

A quick glance at the screenshots will tell you the game's layout: a horizontal-scroller with big sprites. Thanks to *Kick Off*, most people reckon a vertically scrolling pitch is the most reliable way to present a good footy game these days, but there's no proof a horizontal one can't work, and Domark are determined to prove the point.

One of their tactics is to make sure they include all three gameplay options of the coin-op: two players can play head to head (the best way to do it – taking on a buddy at any game is always good for a laugh), on the same side (a complicated affair in which all intentions of cooperative teamwork get thrown out in pursuit of individual goalmouth heroics), or, more simply, one guy can take on the Amiga.

Whichever mode you play, the action is at least fairly fast and furious. The coin-op version featured some pretty heavy-duty graphic scaling as the game 'camera' zoomed in and out of the action, highlighting special moments like free kicks and



Converted from the arcades, the Amiga plays surprising like the original.

from the *Super Sprint/Supercars* school of racing, with its every-which-way scrolling track, if ever I saw one.

As is often the case with these things, playing wintry events on your tod is not much fun, so it's nice to see that a maximum of six players can take part in a competition, with up to two of them on-screen simultaneously. (In the absence of a chum, the computer controls the second player and seems to take great delight in thrashing your pants off – a bore, if ever there was one.)

That's all there is to say really. The music's quite jolly and actually manages to come across as 'tele-aural', while the use of sound is adequate, if a little inappropriate at times. The presentation's no big deal either, but it's better than nothing – preceding each event there's some big scrolly transparent lettering that moves across a snowscape (that's not bad) and a digitised animated sequence, usually involving a camera – though I can't help feeling the designers and programmers should have spent the effort providing more interactive playability instead. As I said, the multi-player element is *Winter Supersports 92*'s saving grace. Otherwise, there's nothing much worth broadcasting.

Still, if you *do* decide to pursue *Winter Supersports 92*, here's a tip to improve the atmosphere: take the lump of polystyrene used to fill out the packaging, break it up into little pieces and voila! Your own snow...

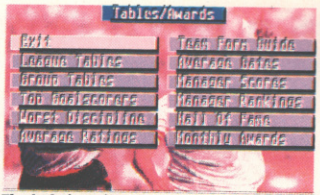
● ***GARY PENN***

THE BOTTOM LINE
A high price to pay for what boils down to four different events. None of them are particularly involving or compelling, but there's fun to be had when more than one player is involved.
61 PERCENT

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER

Publisher: Domark
Price: £24.99
Authors: Paul & Oliver Collyer
Release: Out now

"If you like football, you'll love this," promises the back of the box. Okay, well let's say for the sake of argument that I've been a fanatical Bristol Rovers supporter for as long as I can remember, and was only prevented from pursuing a career in the sport by an unfortunate skateboarding accident at the age of seven. I still can't see what I'm supposed to be getting excited about. For me, the joy of football has always been found out there on the field, not in the huge quantities of statistics that are generated as a by-product.



The bale jumping skater's movements are believable, but it's all very easy to play.

All the same, I have (sort of) enjoyed football management games in the past, and it's inevitable that, whatever I write in this review, a certain percentage of the population will consider this to be the answer to all their dreams. It's certainly got more options, more leagues, more lists of numbers and more evidence of a concerted effort to 'get it right' than any management game I've played in ages.

It's unfortunate, then, that Domark have committed the fundamental error of overlooking the only reason most people ever bother loading up these things at all: there aren't any match highlights! What are they playing at? What's a football management game if it hasn't got little stick people running around scoring the same goal over and over again? The only real concessions to the 20th Century we have here are those two digitised footballers you might be able to make out in the background. Make no mistake – we're looking at something marginally more attractive than the announcement boards at Victoria station.

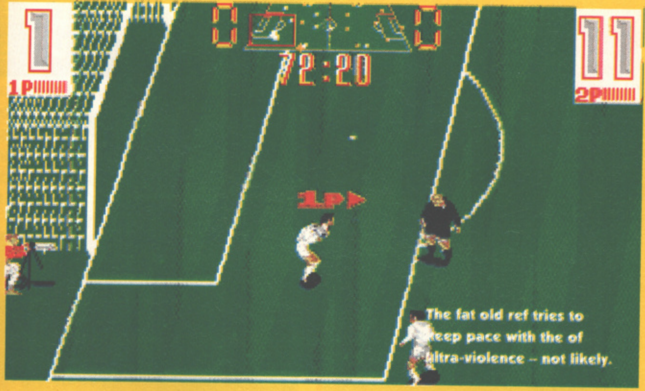
Not only that, there's a ridiculous amount of disk accessing and general hanging around to be endured too, during which you're lucky to be placated by a tiny "Please wait" message in the corner of the screen. You're often left wondering whether the computer has perhaps found something more interesting to do.

You can write me all the letters of complaint you like, but this is by far the most tedious game I've played this year.

● ***JONATHAN DAVIES***

THE BOTTOM LINE
All the ingredients of a classic footy management game, and in many ways that's exacly what it is. That said, it bored me to tears all the same.
38 PERCENT

FOOTBALL CHAMP



The fat old ref tries to keep pace with the of ultra-violence – not likely.

games, you've got to be a bit special to stand out. But is *this*?

kick-offs. As was the case with *Pitfighter*, the Amiga's interpretation of these graphical gymnastics leaves a lot to be desired, but at least it tries. It can't help but be an odd sensation, however, when the couple of hugely overgrown sprites who take the kick off suddenly lurch into the middle distance as the 'camera' retreats to normal game mode, while the illusion of reality is further shaken by the generally jerky and over exaggerated animation of the players.

Ah, yes. The players. Each guy has two controllable moves at his disposal – while he's got the ball, a player (indicated by a big sign over his head) can tap the fire button once to strike the ball along the ground, or twice to hoist it up and under – there's no after touch, so the ball will inevitably end up about ten yards away in the direction you were facing when you hoofed it. Similarly, the same one or two tap trick is used when you haven't got possession – a single tap executes a bona fide legal attempt to tackle, while two of them sends you into Vinnie Jones mode, punching or kicking at your opponent. This illegal stuff can get you sent off, but as the comedy ref actually spends most of the time rolling around on the ground (he's fat and falls over a lot – it's really hysterical for the first three seconds) there's a good chance you could get away with it. (That said, I still managed to get five of my men sent off in my very first match...)

If you think this all adds up to a simple, but possibly quite fun, sort of game then you're probably right. This *is* simple, and stays that way. There are trick shots, but they're executed automatically (your player just happens to be at the right place in relation to the ball at the right time), while fancy stuff like the zooming in and out of close-up serves no useful purpose, a comic referee can't remain funny forever, and there's very little scope for developing an individual style of play. Add to this the fact that there's no fancy shot targeting, no leagues, no skill levels, no substitutions, no extra time, no set-piece construction, no goalkeeping duties to perform (except chosing to dive left or right if facing a penalty), no player analysis and no sign of any championship to win, and you get a game that goes on but never seems to get anywhere. (It hardly seems sporting at this point to mention that two of the nine teams you get to chose between – Brazil and Argentina – weren't part of Europe last time I looked.)

Here's the weird part, however. Having said all that, *Euro Football Champ* still isn't a gameplay disaster. In two-player mode it can be a lot of fun and Domark have managed to make player-switching and passing almost instinctive – you only tend to notice these features if they're bad, and I can't say I've spent any time worrying about them at all. The real problem is that there are so many better titles around at the moment. Everyone goes on about *Sensible Soccer*, but my personal advice is to check out *Striker* – now there's a footy game that *really* kicks.

● ***NEIL WEST***

THE BOTTOM LINE
A no-frills (though slightly off-beat) bog standard footy game that's up against some pretty classy opposition. Forget the coin-op – there was little chance of recreating the fancy graphics here – so instead Domark have concentrated on keeping what gameplay there is up to scratch. A nice try, then – let's face it – unlikely to win the cup.
64 PERCENT

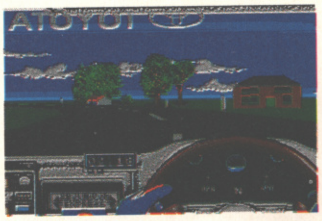
BUDGET

If you've ever complained about the price of games – and we think that's probably most of you – take a look at these instead. Nearly everything ends up at under £10 sooner or later, including some rather fab stuff like this...

TOYOTA CELICA GT RALLY

Publisher: GBH
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now

They say "You shouldn't judge a book by its cover." But then again, they also carnally allege that "You never get a second chance to make a first impression." I must admit to never being quite sure who to believe, but after playing *Toyota Celica GT Rally*, I think I'll use Head and Shoulders for life. *(Eh? Ed.)*



Interesting 'through-the-window' view adds realism to *Toyota*, but in the recent 'Car Wars' this game's been rather left behind.

I mean, take the title *Toyota Celica GT Rally*. It hardly has the same 'ooomph' as something like *Hard Drivin'* or *OutRun*, does it? Which is uncanny, because *Toyota Celica GT Rally* is a kind of cross between those two games, and as such has little of the aforementioned 'ooomph' in the gameplay department either.

To get a proper idea of what I mean, either a) look at the screenshot, or b) imagine the in-car view and kind of 3D effect of *Hard Drivin'* (with optional gears and all that pavlova), then add the jerky sprites which increase in size as they come towards you of an *OutRun*-style game. Gremlin may be undisputed masters of the driving game at the moment, but this dates from the period when they were just starting to get their act together, and as such may disappoint those buyers hoping for a £7.99 version of the great *Lotus II*.

The other point of comparison is, of course, *Test Drive*, which featured a similar combination of 3D and sprites, though in *Test Drive* you weren't driving a Toyota, you weren't racing around a load of tracks, and the computer didn't shriek "Left", "Right", "Hard left" and "Hard right" every time you needed to turn left, right and so on. *Test Drive* also didn't give you the choice to enter the world rally championship, nor did it including different weather conditions, both of which weigh things heavily in *Toyota*'s favour.

In short, this is still the best rally game, if only because there aren't many others, and fans are bound to be quite keen on it. Me? I thought the graphics a bit naff, the car handled badly and, all in all, I found it a rather boring and unmoving experience. But then, what did you expect from a game that claims to have been written by Fungus the Bogeyman?

● *RICH PELLEY*

THE BOTTOM LINE
An average sort of driving game which, all things considered, is a little too boring for comfort. Rally fans only hve this and *Lombard* to choose from.
57 PERCENT

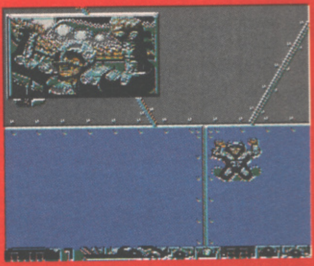
THE BITMAP BROTHERS VOLUME 1

Publisher: Renegade
Price: £25.99
Release: Out now

It's been a long lay-off for Renegade, as they retreated to lick their wounds after the less-than-ecstatic critical reaction to *Magic Pockets* (in AMIGA POWER and one or two other of the less sheep-like magazines, at any rate), not that it's put them off – even as they prepare for a busy summer with *The Chaos Engine, Sensible Soccer* and *Fire And Ice*, they're planning to mop up a few more paying customers with a couple of compilations of back-catalogue Bitmap Brothers games.

First up, and covering almost the entire published lifespan of the ever-expanding programming team, *The Bitmap Brothers Volume 1* features vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up *Xenon, Knight Lore*-style arcade adventure *Cadaver*, and totally violent future sport sim *Speedball 2* in what's if nothing else a varied collection.

It's a varied collection in more ways than one, though. The quality of the games here swings wildly from the sublime (*Speedball 2*) to the ridiculous (*Xenon*), with the 'quite good' *Cadaver* somewhere in the middle. *Speedball 2* has been Number Three in our All-Time Top 100 for two years running, and comes perilously close to justifying the price of this compilation by itself. (If you couldn't buy it from numerous discount outfits for about seven quid these days, it'd do just that.) In our very first issue we called it 'a subtle blend of extreme violence and really extreme violence', but that's only half the secret of what makes this such a great game. The other half comes from the instinctive control and the potential depth (ie it's there if you want to explore it, but you can zap straight through just for quick thrills if you like), but mostly from the plain and simple enormous playability. And just as a bonus, the graphics and sound are excellent too.

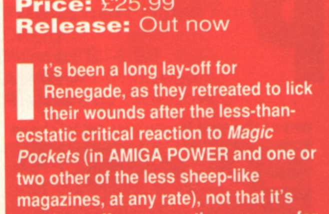


***Speedball 2*: Pre-Sensible Soccer, the best two-player Amiga game ever. Fabulous.**

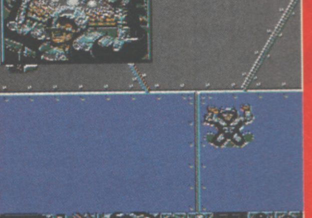
Cadaver is an extremely pretty game, but an over-complicated control system and some heavy disk accessing drags it down a bit. Still, there's a lot of life in it, a fact indicated by the number of letters we still get for The Last Resort about it, and it's pretty rewarding stuff if you stick at it. Not bad at all, and if you look at it as an eight-and-a-bit-quid budget title, it's a fair enough deal.

Xenon, unfortunately for a compilation with only three games in it, is the traditional turkey. Inexplicably popular on first release (it was prettier than other shoot-'em-ups at the time, but not really any better to play), this now comes across as a dull, tediously difficult, unexciting-looking and unpleasant-to-control blaster that you'll stick with for about as long as it took you to read this review. I'm bored with *Xenon* now. Can we just pretend it didn't happen or something?

● *STUART CAMPBELL*



***Cadaver*: Not the big hit many Bitmap games have been, but rewarding stuff.**



***Xenon*: Great looking at the time (early '88), but really very so-so with hindsight.**

THE BOTTOM LINE
Mixed bag, fair value if you don't have *Speedball 2* or *Cadaver*, but the price-to-number-of-games ratio is far too high considering the age of the contents. Think about it carefully.
67 PERCENT

RAINBOW ISLANDS

Publisher The Hit Squad
Price £7.99
Release Out now

What can you say about The Best Amiga Game Of All Time? It's colourful? It's cute? Or how about just 'Buy it'?

You know when you get up in the middle of the night, go downstairs to the kitchen, and make yourself a huge snack (oops, I just typed 'snake' there, bit of a Freudian slip, I think) with loads of cheese and pasta and chocolate and toast and stuff, then when you get up in the morning you find a load of oddly-coloured sticky mess all over the table and tomato ketchup in the sugar bowl and you can't remember for a minute how it all got there? Well, *Rainbow Islands* is a bit like that. *(Er, what? – Ed.)*

You go for a quick game, you play away quite happily for 10 minutes or so, and you get up only to find that it's 45 years later and you're married with three children. *(Er... – Ed.)* It's a bit like being sent to jail for life after murdering someone, only more fun. *(Nurse! – Ed.)* If you imagine life as being like a movie, *Rainbow Islands* is the bit in JFK where they show the Zapruder film of Kennedy's assassination over and over again, plus the bit in Misery where Kathy Bates smashes James Caan's ankles with a hammer, plus the bit in 1984 where Richard O'Brien rips out John Hurt's tooth with his bare hands, plus the bit in RoboCop where RoboCop looks straight into the camera and says 'Stay out of trouble', plus the bit in Star Trek II where Spock dies tragically of radiation poisoning, plus the bit in The Shining where Jack Nicholson hacks through the door with the axe, plus the whole of An American Werewolf In London, plus the bit in Airplane where the tower says 'They're on instruments up there', all rolled into one. Finishing *Rainbow Islands* is like scoring the winning goal in a cup final, only more exclusive.

Rainbow Islands is the game keyboards were built for (only the truly sad play it with joysticks), and the only game that makes Super NES owners wish they had an Amiga. It's beyond criticism. It's the game that separates the true lover of video-game entertainment as a concept, and a part of a complete and fulfilling life, from the pathetic no-hope trainspotter loser too terminally screwed-up and repressed to enjoy anything with primary colours in it. If you don't like this game, I hope you die horribly of something painful before your breathing pollutes the air of the planet for another single second. Your sort makes me sick.

● *STUART CAMPBELL*

THE BOTTOM LINE

If this game was a tree, it'd be a 250-foot Canadian Giant Redwood. Which, if you haven't got it yet, is exactly what you deserve to be hit around the head with. Don't be an idiot all your life, go out and buy this now!

96 PERCENT

FANTASYPAK

Publisher: Silmarils (Daze Marketing)
Price: £19.99
Release: Out Now

Here we have a curious collection of wares from maison de software Silmarils. *Fantasypak* comprises the French publisher's three finest hours to date, namely *Boston Bomb Club, Colorado* and *Crystals Of Arborea.*

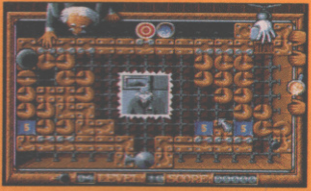
Boston Bomb Club's the best of the bunch. This one's a peculiar puzzler which reminds me of Rainbow Arts' _Logical_, only _BBC_ has a olde world flavour and scantily-clad, top-heavy dolly birds. And bombs, of course. The idea is to guide these explosive devices, deposited from a dispenser, around tables of grooved tiles to the target areas.

The tables are presented as oddly-titled levels ('Baby's War'?) and feature gates to open and close, rotating grooves, dissolving tiles, trampolines, and the occasional bonus point tile to collect. Each table is also home to some strange characters hanging around the edges. One old boy fiddles with the tiles, while another blocks your vision of the bombs' route with a newspaper. On a later level, a baby crawls across the table and causes havoc. It's all a little odd, but there are enough playable benefits on offer to make the _Boston Bomb Club_ well worth joining.

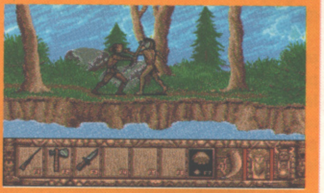
The olde worlde theme continues with _Colorado_, in which you play a strapping western trapper. I'm not going to bother relating _Colorado_'s dreary storyline or even the tiresome task in hand, but suffice it to say, the arcade adventure action has a beat-'em-up bent and is slow-paced, vacuous and boring.

And stupid. Should you stray too far from the path and fall to the water below, you die instantly. This is all very well in the Real World, but does little for playability. The best bits in _Colorado_ are a) the indians blowing up when you hit, stab, shoot or hack them to death (!), and b) shooting the rapids and using your oar to bash other canoeists against the rocks (strangely, you can hit obstacles without fear of death). Other than that, though, the game's largely fun-free. _Colorado_? _Col-BORE-ado_ more like.

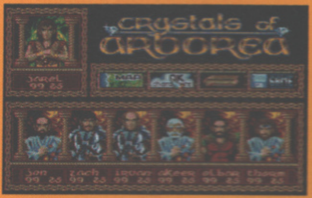
The third and final part of the pack is a Role Playing Adventure of sorts called _Crystals Of Arborea._ In it you play Jarel, last prince of blah blah etcetera and so on, and your quest is to find the four crystals of Arborea and put them back from where they came. Or something.



Boston Bomb Club: only out at full price a few months back, and excellent fun.



Colorado: the French still love Westerns long after everyone else got bored...



Crystals Of Arborea: close inspection reveals it to be a close relative of _Ishar_!

With a team of six characterless chaps by your side (you get a choice of Magician, Ranger and Warrior) you explore an island by means of two displays: a bland map and a (much more impressive) Jarel's-eye-view. There's no smooth or fluid movement (a la, say, a driving simulation) here – just a step by step update which is actually quite believable.

During your travels you meet characters to fight and can sometimes acquire items of interest by correctly answering trivia questions. Sadly, there's little sonic support (a few bird noises at best) and interesting events are few and far between (the fighting takes place on a silly little grid-work screen). _Crystals Of Arborea_? _Crystals Of Ar-BORE-a_ more like. And that's yer lot. Not a great collection.

● *GARY PENN*

THE BOTTOM LINE

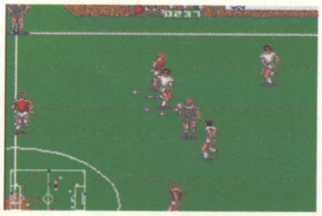
Well, it's not my idea of a 'fantasy pack', that's for sure, but having said that, 20 quid doesn't seem too extortionate a price to pay for a little cracker and two pieces of pap.

66 PERCENT

MANCHESTER UNITED

Publisher GBH Gold
Price: £9.99
Release: Out now

Anyone not sick of football yet? Well, for the four of you, here's a budget re-release of the predecessor to our old favourite (pre-*Sensible Soccer*, that is) Amiga footy game, *Manchester United Europe.*



Manchester United: completely left behind in the wake of a zillion great football games. Still, at least it's cheap...

Manchester United is a game in much the same style, mostly arcade-orientated sideways-on action, with a little bit of management simulation thrown in just to make it interesting. Be the team, be the manager, be both at the same time, or switch around and join in at will – this is a game where you only have to play the bits you like. So far so good, but are there actually any bits you *will* like?

The conclusive answer to that is 'Well, sort of, ish'. As an arcade football game *Manchester United* is a bit of a disaster – no flow at all, incomprehensible kicking system, brilliant goalies that give you a better-than-even chance of getting a no-score draw even if you don't touch the joystick – but it's a reasonably tolerable, if far from comprehensive, management game. Having to pick your entire team individually before every game is a pain in the backside, as is the pointlessly confusing icon system – I've never understood what was wrong with words myself – but this way the game is at least a bit entertaining, as long as you don't mind only seeing a goal once in every three games. Not really 10 quid's worth of entertaining, mind you, but you pays your money and you takes your choice, I guess.

● *STUART CAMPBELL*

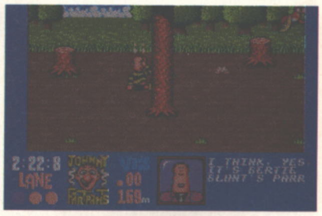
THE BOTTOM LINE

Pretty hopeless football game, better as a management sim but still not much cop. Five bonus marks for having Jim Leighton in it, though.

45 PERCENT

VIZ

Publisher: Tronix
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now



Viz: from out of nowhere this has been voted Official Toilet Humour Computer Game Of The British Olympic Team – Not!

As Virgin's refreshingly truthful advertising campaign vaguely hinted at the time of first release ("You'll never play a bigger load of crap in your life"), it may be assumed that those programming people at Probe weren't really in the business of creating an earth-shakingly historic →

Amiga product here. I mean, how do you convert everybody's favourite lav-mag onto the small screen? According to Probe, it's by doing away with such frivolities as gameplay and concentrating on the graphics, humour and (slightly muted) bad language instead.

A wise move one may think, but unfortunately there are a few flaws in the plan. Firstly, the graphics. All your favourite characters are bowel-shatteringly accurate to the comic, but once you've seen them all on your first go, the interest level flags a bit.

As for the game; this comes at you in three stages. Firstly, pick a character out of Johnny Fartpants, Buster Gonad and Biffa Bacon. Then enter an all-out joystick waggling nice-graphiced but phew-this-hurts-your-hand sub-game in order to build up your tokens. Then start the race against the other two characters, avoiding hazards (else you fall and lose time) and using tokens to clear your path or avoid tricky situations, each character boasting a special feature – if you know the comic you can probably guess who does what. Then you have to keep this up for five levels (or you die and start again). Unbelievably shallow, then, with frustrating and boring gameplay, not helped by long disk accesses. It is, however, endearingly crap and very true to its source.

So what's the mark? Well, at this point I'm going to tread in territory only dreamt of by other reviewers and (gasp! swoon!) out-Stuart Campbell Stuart Campbell, who originally gave this 58 percent (at full price) on the grounds that it was quite funny to play. Funny, maybe, but surely you'd be better off buying a whole load of the comics instead?

● *RICH PELLEY*

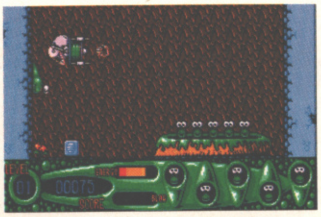
THE BOTTOM LINE

Hooray! for the graphics! Hurrah! for the jokes! But Boo! Hiss! for the crappy gameplay. Only worth it for novelty value, even here on budget.

45 PERCENT

STEG THE SLUG

Publisher: Code Masters
Price: £7.99
Release: Out now



Cute, and decidedly un-slug-like, Steg looks all set to become Code Masters' next big game star. Just you watch him...

After a casual fling after one too many drinks at last year's office do, Steg The Slug now has to spent his days catching food to feed the hungry mouths of a number of newly acquired offspring, and here's where you come in. You are separated from T'yungunz (as they're known here – try saying it out loud) by an vertically inter-connecting series of passageways and rooms. Maggots appear with you at the start of each level and by blowing and trapping them in bubbles you can send them floating up towards your nest of T'yungunz at the end.

The bubbles are likely to pop on spikes but via various methods, introducing the puzzle element of the game, hopefully when they do, they'll pop so the maggots land nearer their goal than where they started, putting them in an ideal spot to be re-bubbled and then re-directed upwards.

If it all sounds a little out of the ordinary (in fact, Mastertronic's 8-bit *One Man And His Droid* is the only near comparison I can come up with), this is perhaps why I like it so much. The overall originality (not to mention the neat password system) explains *Steg's* hook – you want to get onto the next level if only to see what it looks like. The Codies' usual budgety cartoony graphics fit in well – though these are a lot better than most – whilst once again they've implemented enough features (Steg can climb walls, and gain feet and jetpacks from bonuses) to keep the interest level high throughout. This is just frustratingly addictive enough (expect to run out of time or bubble energy just at the last minute) to keep you coming back time after time.

All in all then, a great Codies game – very simple underneath, but nicely presented, packed with little surprises, and with a lovely friendly feel. For good clean fun though, you can't go wrong – and expect to see Steg again very soon.

● *RICH PELLEY*

THE BOTTOM LINE

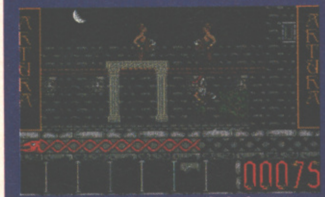
Obvious budget material, but great stuff all the same. Top fun for hermaphrodite lovers everywhere.

79 PERCENT

GET IT HERE FOR £2.99!

Rich Pelley on the latest Prism bargs.

ARTURA



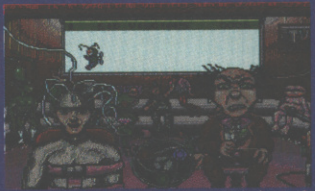
***Artura* – the dullest type of platformer. And it's already been on a mag cover.**

An ex-covergame from a certain rival magazine that is best left unmentioned (ZERO, of course), I don't think it would be too unfair to label *Artura* as, well, a bit of a steaming great pile of an arcade adventure really. Once again the problem is speed; your character trundles along at an appallingly slow pace which, as it always does, soon puts any game where all you have to do is to walk around a large map shooting things in its place.

Come to think of it, how many of these walky roundy mappy shooty games have ever been any good on the Amiga? Very, very few of them I'd say – personally I always seem to think that they seem much more at home and are far more successful on the 8-bit machines. If you agree with me on this one, you'll leave *Artura* well, well alone.

30 Percent

MADSHOW TV

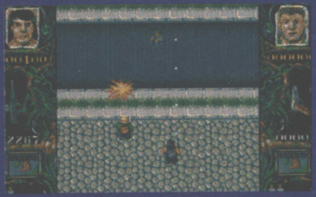


***Mad TV*: it's mad and it's got TVs in it. And it's nothing like *Smash TV* whatsoever.**

If there's one person I wouldn't like to meet down a dark alleyway in the middle of the night, it's the author of *Madshow TV*. You see, he's mad – at least if his game *Madshow TV* is anything to go by. Load up the game and you're introduced to the 'Mad Show' by a talking plant followed closely by Miguello the Midget. You, and up to five equally mad pals, are then transported into the gameshow, where you can take part in four separate (and far too strange to explain here) sub-games, the only physically playable part of what you're paying for. None of them are worth more than a couple of plays, but the remaining presentation is just so weird and wonderful that it might just be worth the cash to see it for yourselves.

57 Percent

DOGS OF WAR



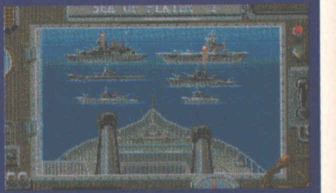
***Ikari Warriors* gets cloned in *Dogs Of War*: *Dogs of BORE* more like.**

After ploughing my way through 11 of these Prism games recently, it seems to me that most have very little going for them, especially considering what's available on PD for much the same price. Most of them originally came out when the Amiga was new and programmers inexperienced, so they tended to be crude versions of games that were really better suited to the lesser machines anyway.

Dogs of War is a classic example of this. It is a straight *Ikari Warriors* vertical shoot-'em-up, but with the quality of every factor from graphics to sprite handling reduced by around half. It ends up only fractionally as enjoyable as *Ikari*, a game which here in 1992 seems chronically dated anyway. So see what I mean?

27 Percent

BATTLESHIPS



***Battleships*: what's there to say? (Except that they're totally crap.)**

Hmmm, well, it's Battleships, innit? Three quid might seem quite a good buy for an Amiga game, but surely it's a little expensive for a pad of paper and a pencil – which, face it, is all you need for a decent game of Battleships, should you ever feel inclined to snuggle down into it. Obviously not the most promising licence ever (my mad Grandpa claims *he* invented it), but (original publishers) Elite tried to make it vaguely entertaining by adding digitised speech and actual gun fire.

Of course, this didn't help at all – the actual gameplay is no more interesting than the original paper version, although games are far quicker as here you take multiple shots at a time. On the Amiga it's a non-starter though, and no where near as good as the electronic board game version either. Avoid.

13 Percent

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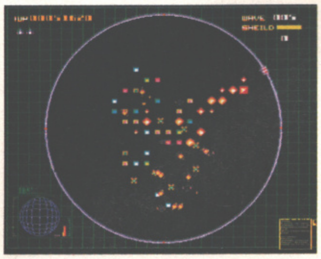
PD

Welcome, once again, to the wonderful world of Public Domain, Shareware and Licenceware – basically, games playing on the cheap. Your host, as ever, is The Man In The Know, Mr Stuart Campbell, and this month he's got some truly excellent offerings to rave about...

MICROBES
(17 Bit)

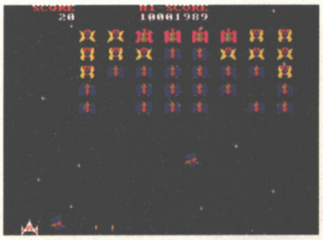

Microbes: nice looking, but soooo easy.

Several people mentioned this one to me this month before I saw it, so I was fairly looking forward to what sounded like a lively and zap-crazed *Tempest* derivative. But yet again, in what's becoming a horribly familiar scenario *(I know. Can't you think of a different way to start a PD game review for a change? – Ed.)*, shattered dreams were the order of the day. It all starts promisingly, and for the first few minutes you think 'Yeah, corking stuff!' as you whizz around the rim of a circle blazing away heroically at the pulsating horde of tiny amoeba-like baddies throbbing their way out at you.

Sadly, an hour and a half later when you're on level 53 with all your lives still intact and the difficulty level not significantly higher than it was at the start, you begin to have doubts. I ended up playing this one-handed while conducting a telephone conversation and not even watching the screen, and I still couldn't get killed. It's all lushly presented and professionally done, but this is strictly for those of you who find *Fun School 4* (the 4-7-year-olds version) too taxing.

VERDICT: Very nicely done, but an unutterably dull game beneath the attractive facade. For the terminally untalented only. ★

GALAXIANS
(17 Bit)



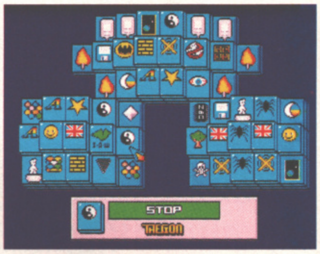
Galaxians: classic visuals, pity about the way everything moves – rather jerkily.

Attentive readers will remember my savage disappointment last issue when a clone of top vintage arcade shoot-'em-up *Galaga* turned out to be a bit of a non-working disaster. Imagine the thrill, then, of discovering this in the review pile. Well, sort of.

Despite the title, it is indeed a *Galaga* game, and it does indeed work, and it does have most of the coin-op features, but style-wise it's just simply not there. Character movement leaves a bit to be desired in the smoothness department, and the sound is particularly flat and drab. That's pretty much all that's wrong with it, but then there's so little to the game in the first place that if you screw up the character movement and the sound there's not really a heck of a lot left. It's not awful by any means – some of the alien attack patterns are quite cute and there's a decent level of difficulty – but the feel for the original so evident in, say, *Smash TV: The Rip-Off* is sadly lacking.

VERDICT: Pleasant enough but ultimately tame and timid single-screen zapper that you'll be bored of in an hour. ★★

DRAGON TILES
(Virus Free, disk 2405)



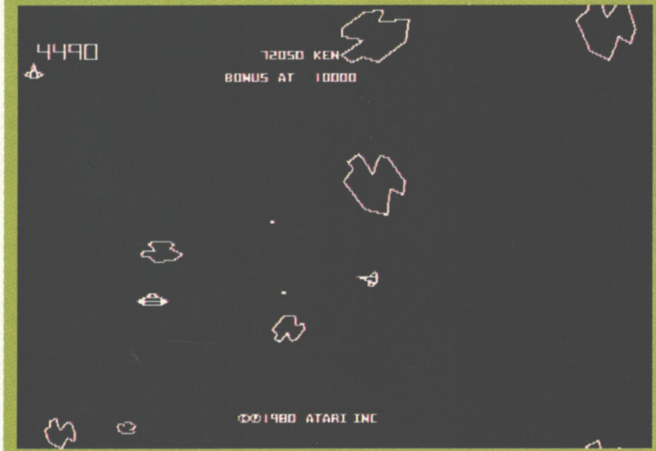
Dragon Tiles: With Activision's *Shanghai* unavailable, this could be a very good bet.

Shanghai time again, folks. This time, though, there's a bit of a difference. While *Dragon Tiles* is the same old Mah Jong-inspired tile-removing game it always was, this version of it gives you a choice of 15 different starting layouts, which all call for slightly different strategic approaches. Oh yeah, and the designs on the tiles are quite sweet too, especially the Miner Willy one. There's no sound, though. And no cheat mode or move-retract or anything like that. And, um, that's it, basically.

While it's the best Amiga PD *Shanghai* game so far, probably, I can see no reason why a version as good as this *with* options shouldn't be in PD very soon. Still, if you want one now, and haven't got a dozen already, this is the one to get.

VERDICT: A five quid shareware fee is probably a bit optimistic, but this is about as nice a *Shanghai* game as you'll get. A little bare on the options front, though. ★★★

ASTEROIDS DELUXE
(Ken Kumar)



Asteroids Deluxe: Classic white-on-black graphics (or lack of them), bags of inertia, and brilliantly mindless gameplay – there are still few more playable games.

And on and on it goes... Old arcade games just don't want to die, and *Asteroids* seems more obstinate than most. To prove the point, here's another cracking variant on the game, to go alongside *Amigoids, Cabaret Asteroids* and *Lemmingoids*.

Making it that little bit different to most is the fact that this is, in fact, a conversion of the little-known Atari coin-op *Asteroids Deluxe*, a sequel to the first *Asteroids* game, which was essentially the same thing as its parent but a lot meaner and with a couple of extra bits. What's happened here is that Canadian programmer Ken Kumar loved the game so much he went out and bought up a load of spare parts, used them to build an *Asteroids Deluxe* machine in his kitchen, and then did the closest conversion he could manage for the Amiga.

Pretty damn close it is too, with all the features of the arcade monster (er, rocks, spaceships and funny hexagon things that chase you all over the screen when you shoot at them), and a few extra ones besides.

Well, about three actually, in that you can change your number of lives, the point at which you get extra ones, and you can fiddle around with the colour scheme (by way of a series of sliders which allow for extremely fine tuning), allowing you to play a game of *Bright Purple Asteroids Floating Through Pea Soup* if you like. It's not quite as slick as *Cabaret Asteroids*, but it's still great stuff – the only flaw being that there's no keyboard control option (apparently Ken doesn't know how to read the Amiga keyboard properly, so if anyone can explain it to him he'd love to hear from you). If you think you've got the better of those pesky space-rock blighters, here's your next challenge.

VERDICT: Excellent conversion of a classic game, and that's all there is to it really. More top entertainment for rock-haters. ★★★★★

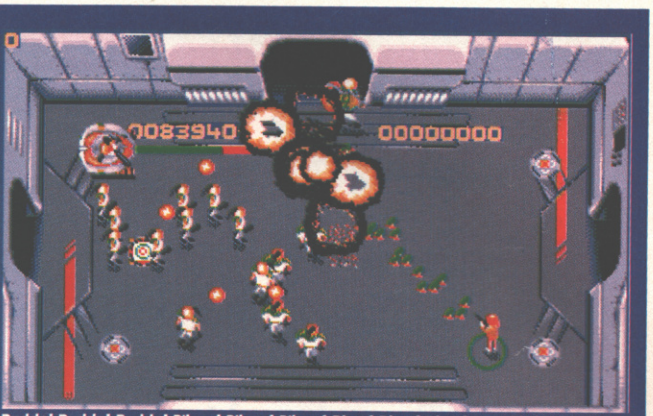
SMASH TV: THE RIP-OFF

(Mark Gallacher)

Well, it shouldn't take you long to work out what this one's all about. The second PD tribute to that grooviest of arcade genocidal blasters, *Smash TV: The Rip-Off* is far and away the better of the two (see *Smash Telly*, issue 13), and not only that, it's better in many ways than Ocean's official conversion. It's faster, slicker, better to control (the firing mechanism is particularly inspired – more on that in a second), and much closer to the spirit of the original game than the lacklustre full-price port, and it's one of the best PD games we've ever seen, basically.

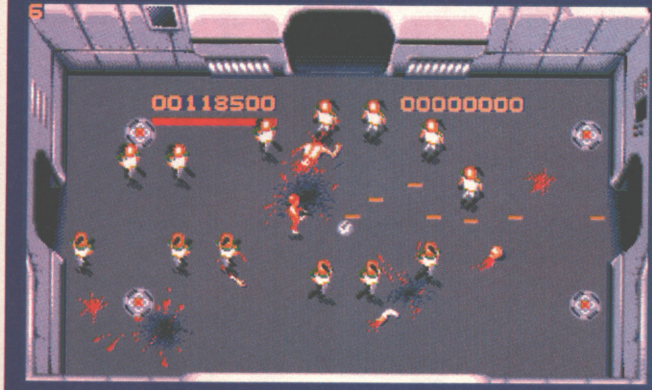
How the firing system works is this – you simply fire in one direction unless you hold down the fire button, which makes you fire in the direction of movement until you let go again, a system that worked (albeit the other way round) in *Llamatron* and works here too. It really makes you wonder why the 'real' *Smash TV* conversion didn't handle things this way in the first place.

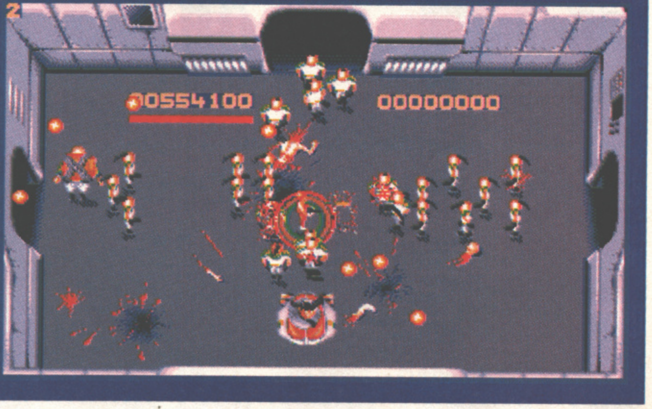
That's it really. This is gloriously psychopathic action from start to finish, and with no slow-down no matter how many dozens of enemy sprites are knocking around, either. You don't really need to know any more than that (well, except for the fact that it's one meg only), do you? Thought not.



Budda! Budda! Budda! P'kow! P'kow! P'kow! Blam! Blam! Blam! Etc. This is, perhaps, the most enjoyable *Smash TV* version we've seen (but don't tell Ocean we said that!)

VERDICT: Absolutely fabulous blasting romp – if you ever liked *Llamatron*, you'll love this. Three quid shareware fees have never been better spent – get yourself a copy at once. ★★★★★





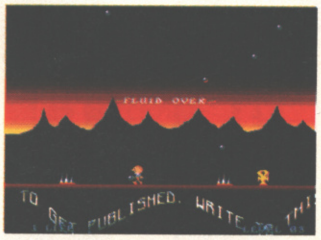
Above and right: Brakka! Brakka! Brakka! Pow! Pow! Pow! Etc. More mindless mega-death from *Smash TV: The Rip Off*. ('Nice' blood splat effects on the ground too.)

DATACLAN GAMES DISK 2

(Dataclan)

After the success of *Dataclan Games Disk 1* (see last issue), our favourite PD people of the month (because they do it the way it should be done – send a blank disk, or two in this case, and an SAE and they'll send you the stuff. No £3.50 'Licenceware' here) have come up with a sequel.

What we've got here is a two-disk package for one meg machines only, and it features some more excellent titles, several of which we've already put on our coverdisks. The full listing is *Zeus* (brilliant *Puzznic* clone), *Drip* (all-time PD classic painter game), *Megaball* (hugely popular *Arkanoid* copy, although I don't like it myself), *Rollerpede* (groovy *Centipede*), *Shoot Out* (fabulously mindless blaster), *X-Fire* (tricky maze shoot-'em-up), *Wizzy's Quest* (mindbending platform adventure puzzler) and *Mr Munk* (er, none of the above), and if that little lot for the price of a stamp sounds like a bargain to you, you're not as daft as you look.



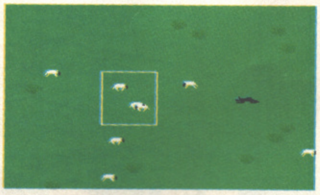
Well, yes, alright, so *Mr Munk* doesn't look like the most amazing thing ever, but it's quite good fun to play, honest. And there's lots of other great stuff on the disk too.

VERDICT: Some exceptionally good games all conveniently bunged onto two disks for your playing enjoyment. It would be pointlessly stupid of you to miss it. ★★★★★

ONE MAN AND HIS DOG

(Highland, disk 21)

Good grief, I haven't seen one of these in a long time. Way back in the days of the ZX81 (sigh), every other type-in program in a magazine (yes, you used to actually get programs listed out on the page which you typed in yourself – no coverdisks in those days, all you MTV-generation kids) was a sheepdog simulator. Basically, you controlled a sheepdog, you had a sheep pen somewhere on the screen, and a load of sheep flitting around which you had to herd into the pen by, essentially, standing behind them. It was great fun. And now you can do it on your Amiga.



Get the sheep in the square. It's easy – Not!

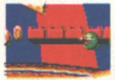
VERDICT: You don't often see a blast from quite this far back in the past. Totally ridiculous, but good for a laugh, especially for kiddies. ★★

NEXT MONTH: CALVIN AND HOBBES!

This month's contact addresses: KEN KUMAR, PO Box 443, Dartmouth Main, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada, B2Y 3Y8; **VIRUS FREE**, 31 Faringdon Road, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 5AR Tel 0793 512321; **17 BIT,** 1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield, WF1 1DH Tel 0924 366982; **DATACLAN,** c/o 17 Saltford, Allerdene Est, Low Fell, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE9 6BG (send two blank disks and SAE); **HIGHLAND PD** 255 Drumossie Avenue, Inverness, IV2 3SX Tel 0463 242431; **MARK GALLAGHER,** 116 Broomhill Drive, Glasgow, G11 7AS; and that's yer lot. See you next month.

POINTS OF VIEW

It's back! The incredibly-hard-bit where we try to sum up the month's big games in a couple of words!

	 WIZKID	JAGUAR XJ220	STRIKER	EPIC	SENSIBLE SOC	MONKEY IS 2	HOOK	DUNE	TV BASEBALL	ISHAR	HOSTILE BREED	TEMPTRESS	RISKY WOODS
MATT BIELBY	Clever, silly & fun ★★★★★	Gremlin won't be quaking... ★★★	Fast but not Sensible ★★★★	Worth the wait – not! ★★	Best two player ever! ★★★★★	Great, but £37.99!! ★★★★	Lovely film adaptation ★★★★	Got me into the book...! ★★★	Boring sport, okay game ★★★	Good but no worldbeater ★★★	Parts greater than whole ★★★	85 % there ★★★★	Average but still fun ★★★
MARK RAMSHAW	Friday, I'm in love ★★★★★	I'll wait for *Crazy Cars 3* ★★★	The second best footy ★★★★	Are they joking? ★	Ace – game of the year . ★★★★★	Most fun (on hard drive) ★★★★★	Surprisingly groovy ★★★★	Francesca – what a babe ★★★★	Better than *RBI-2* ★★★	Kind of alright ★★★	Nearly brilliant ★★★★	A freaky fairy-tale ★★★★	Originality zero ★★★
STUART CAMPBELL	Wonderful, but short ★★★★★	A bit of a snooze ★★★	Very good, but... ★★★★	Where's the rest of it? ★	Astonishingly magnificent ★★★★★	Extortionate but good ★★★★	Sweet but short-lived ★★★★	Haven't played it	Baseball – crap, isn't it? ★★★	Haven't played it	A bit over-complicated ★★★	Better than *Monkey 2* ★★★★★	Fun but very limited ★★★
GARY PENN	At last! A funny game! ★★★★★	We've seen it all before ★★★	Haven't played it	Haven't played it	Best since *Kick Off* ★★★★★	As good as expected ★★★★★	Haven't played it	Haven't played it	Haven't played it	Haven't played it	Old fashioned ★★★	A brilliant first try ★★★★	One of millions ★★★
MATTHEW SQUIRES	A barrel of laughs ★★★★	An insult to a great car ★★★	I'd rather strike a match ★★★	I'm still waiting... ★	Just awesome ★★★★★	*How* much? Come on! ★★★★	Haven't played it	Haven't played it	Snoozeball! ★★	Haven't played it	Something's missing! ★★★	Absolutely brilliant ★★★★★	Enjoyable *Samurai* stroll ★★★★

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INVADERS!

It was how computer games began. Celebrate every possible variation on the classic game-style you can think of with us, including the results of our Win A Job With Bullfrog competition from way back in issue two!

PLUS! TWO PLAYER EXTRAVAGANZA! With the release of *Sensible Soccer*, what better time to check out the 20 best Amiga simultaneous two-player games? AND! Vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up buyer's guide! REVIEWED! *Dojo Dan, Ashes Of Empire, Crazy Cars III, D-Generation* and more! DON'T MISS IT!

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DO THE write THING

Are you lot mad or what? This month we have one eminently sensible and well-reasoned letter (immediately below), the usual number of complaints (including one from A Famous Programmer), and lots of, erm, drivel. FRP freaks, Gamesmaster-haters and Stuart Campbell-lovers, they're all here, and each one generally makes less sense than the last. Enough already! The campaign for sane correspondence starts here...

● Address your letters to AMIGA POWER, Beaufort Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath Avon, BA1 2BW

LONGEST LETTER winner

'I CAN'T TAKE IT ANY LONGER!'

Dear AP,

After reading your magazine since issue one, I can't take it any longer! Not the magazine – that's fine – but the letters printed each month. Bit of background here: I've worked as a games programmer for almost a decade now, since the dawn of time it seems. I've seen magazines come and go, and the same complaints on the letter pages. Someone should put these people straight.

First, why complain about the price of games? £25, £30 even £35, is a fair price. Computer games are a form of entertainment, right? So how does the price of a game compare to other entertainment prices? See a movie, for example. £3.50 entrance fee, a couple of quid on popcorn, nachos or coke, a few quid bus fare or petrol money all for 90 minutes entertainment. Even without food, you can see five movies maximum for £25.99. That's eight hours of entertainment. 'Stu' from Manchester should perhaps ponder that when complaining about completing *Another World* in one day.

For the price of a budget game, you can buy a sell-through video release. A couple of hours later you'll have seen it and probably not watch it again for quite a while. *Rainbow Islands* suddenly becomes a hell of a bargain considering the many (enjoyable) weeks it takes to master.

You can buy almost three CDs for the price of Geoff (*Sir Geoffrey – Ed.*) Crammond's *Formula One Grand Prix.* But that game offers many months of entertainment – I'm still playing it several months after buying it and will probably still be in many months' time.

The usual follow-up arguments to these points are as follows...

'Most games are crap.' Yes, I couldn't agree more. 90% of games are crap. Just as crap as 90% of movies, videos, music, television and so on. Most of everything is crap – a fact of life. Read reviews or ask to play in a shop and then you won't buy a crap game. Simple, really.

'But I only have £x pocket money.' But you have £400 worth of computer, you can't expect to pay peanuts for stuff to run on it. Just as cars need petrol, tax and insurance, computers need games. This should be considered when buying the machine. If you wait 6-12 months, the game will probably be re-released at a tenner or less. And a few months later on a compilation at six or seven quid a game. You don't have to pay full price, at least not for the 99% of games that are handled this way.

'I bet all you programmers are rich anyway.' No. You can make heaps of cash from a big hit, but there aren't many of those. Most programmers earn fairly poor wages compared to people with far less knowledge writing boring business programs for people in suits. And the hours can be long, there isn't much job security and you slave for months trying to produce something decent and then the punters queue up to buy *WWF* because it's got a picture of Hulk Hogan on the box.

'But why should I buy something when I can get it ripped off for free?' Because it's illegal. And it's killing your machine.

Perhaps the final point is the most important. As I said, I work in computers. *(Blimey, doesn't it get a bit cramped? – Ed.)* Or used to. I am moving to the consoles, as most of my contemporaries are. That's where the sales are, that's where the money is. Ask anyone in the industry. Piracy is the only reason for this. There are many fewer Mega Drives in the UK than Amigas, but this Christmas will probably see Mega Drive games outselling Amiga ones. Why? There's only one reason – you can't rip off a console game. Well, you can, but it costs £150 for a copier so that puts most people off.

I think an Amiga console is a good idea. That, or releasing all future games on cartridge. Maybe the A600's card slot will take off, but I can't see it. Why should a software house support a very small card-slot market when owners of A600s can run ripped-off disk versions anyway? Universal cartridge releases would save the day, but only if they are genuinely impossible to pirate.

Then those who complain about the price of a game could rent them from a video shop, just like growing numbers of console owners already can. Then, if the game is crap or they can finish it in 10 minutes, it only costs a few quid. A fair system of compensation for games rental must be devised or the software companies, as well as programmers like myself, won't have the financial incentive to allow games to be rented.

I hope that someone somewhere stamps out piracy, otherwise it's bye-bye Amiga. I'm fairly well resigned to the fact I'll be reading complaints in 'Console Power' or whatever in a couple of years' time about paying £45 for *Sonic 3* or *Mario 6 (That's a bit optimistic, I think. Some 8-bit Nintendo games already cost over £50!– Ed.)*

The 8-bit markets are already dead, save for the odd twitch here or there. The ST is dying. Unless the punters want the Amiga to be next, they should stop whining about the price of games whilst copying everything they can lay their hands on. Realising the price isn't that steep should be the first step.

Yours feeling-better-for-that-rant, Peter Scott,
Dylan Productions, Bedlington

Lots of interesting points there, Peter, and one of the most coherently-argued letters we've had in quite a while. All the same, I would take issue with one point – computer games are too expensive. *I think we've pretty much reached a point where the consensus of opinion is that yes, they should be cheaper, not only to stop piracy, but also because we can't see games being the mass-market entertainment they deserve to be when they cost such a lot more than CDs and videos. Certainly, most of us here in the office go out with the idea of maybe buying some music, but we don't know what we'll get until we're in the shop . We're willing to risk £10 on something we don't know much about, you see, but we'd certainly never dare risk £25 or £30 – and entertainment-per-pound, CDs are arguably better value than even the biggest game too.*

'MORAL VALUES'

Sir,

I wish to complain most strongly about the moral values which your publication, and others like it, are instilling in young people today. I am referring to your regular reviews of that disgusting fantasy role-play software.

Now I am a peace-loving ogre as a rule, but ever since games like *Eye Of The Beholder* and *Dungeon Master* became popular, I am not even safe in my own hovel. Only last week, a group of acne-ridden teenage adventurers burst in with an unlicensed spell book and a dodgy theatrical sword, and stole all the food from my fridge!

It used to be only the Black Satanic Witness people who came knocking on my door with leaflets just as my tea came to the boil, but these adventure types just won't go away. They'll stand on my doorstep for hours spouting nonsense about fame and vast wealth until I sign up for their quest (ten days free home trial and no commitment).

Now you may think this is all amusing, but for me and thousands of fantasy creatures like me, fantasy role play is becoming a Knightmare *(Arf! – Ed)*. The vampire family next door have been forced to move out by these people and yet you still refer to these acts of violence and aggression as *heroic*!

How would you like it if me and the lads came to your town, slaughtered the population and looted your houses? Not a lot methinks. So please show a little consideration for underworld dwellers in future, you'll find that deep down under the scales, we are just the same as you!

Yours, Boggit The Ogre,
13a Black Pit Street, The Dark Crypt,
Under-water Deep.

'OFFENDING ARTICLES'

Dear AMIGA POWER,

I am writing to complain about two letters that were published in last month's mag. The offending articles were written by Peter Whelerton and Pat Reeve. Both of these letters had a bash at role playing. Mr Whelerton seemed to believe that we are 'introverted Dungeons & Dragons freaks with acne' while Ms Reeve called RPGs occulty. Let's get a few things straight.

Firstly, I play role playing games and I do not believe that I am an introverted freak. Mr Whelerton is moaning about a biased and incorrect view of his hobby while he harbours such a view about one of mine. Let's not descend into name calling, I'll admit that there are people

→

DO THE write THING

SENSIBLE SOCCER winner

'SCATHINGLY UNTRUE'

Dear AMIGA POWER,
I was deeply disgusted with your views on my excellent game *Kick Off 2*. Having spent two long hard years writing and researching the game, I was overcome with emotional tearjerking turmoil when I was glancing through issue 13.

The reason for my turmoil was the comment, or should I say the scathing criticism, that *Kick Off 2* was an 'Inexplicably-overrated pinball playalike that it really is'! And then I read on and found another scathingly untrue criticism, it's 'Simply too frustrating by half'. Well, it's as frustrating as *Super Space Invaders* is original.

I would also like to inform you that over 50,000 people have bought my game, it was 7th in last year's Top 100, and *Final Whistle* is still in the present Top 100, so by slagging off this game you are simply slagging off the people who bought it.

However, as an avid computer football player, I would be very interested in what all the fuss is about with this new game, maybe it could give me some ideas about my forthcoming games *Player Manager 2* and *Kick Off 3*, so if you are feeling generous I could see myself forgiving you if you sent me a copy of the full game of *Sensible Soccer*, so I could review it.
Yours sincerely jerked off, Dino Dini, Bristol

*Hmm – interesting football game/*Super Space Invaders *analogy there, Dino. To be serious for a moment, though, we're extremely concerned that you're upset about our views on* Kick Off 2 *– it's not a personal attack, you know, just a view on a game.*

Anyway, as any of you who were at the Amiga Shopper Show will know, we did indeed suggest that Dino and Sensible's Jon Hare (who's himself a big Kick Off *fan, actually!) meet up, review each others games, and we'd print the results in the mag. Unfortunately however, when it came down to it Dino had to back out due to pressing* Kick Off 3 *deadlines (or something) so it now looks like this potentially fascinating meet will never happen. (He did offer to send three of his playtesters along instead, but we didn't think that would be quite the same.) And, this time, that really is the last correspondence we're going to print about* Kick Off 2. *Its time is over.*

who live on role-playing and take it very seriously, but the computer world has these too. I know of quite a few adolescent computing freaks but I also know well enough that this is not the general case.

And as for Ms Reeves' comments about the occult, I thought that role playing had got over that years ago. I have been playing them for years now and a lot of people I know do too, and not one of my friends has ever dabbled in the occult. I can clearly state that I am not a Satanist nor do I go around worshipping some sort of 'demon'. I see no reason why a Christian should object to these games. In the rarest and most extreme case, the character you control might be a blood-letting demon-worshipper, but the player still isn't, a very clear distinction.

Rounding off, I believe that computers have a lot to offer role playing and vice versa. I sincerely hope to see the two hobbies get closer together, not further apart, and I also like to think that the views in these letters are in no way an indication of the general opinion of your mag's readers but are the ill-informed ramblings of two ignorant people.
Yours sincerely, Mark Oliver, Hornchurch

PS I can guess that you'll take a lot of stick for making *Rainbow Islands* the No.1 game again, but I'd like to cast my lot by saying that it IS the best game – anyone can like it, sim addicts, arcade game fans and even role players.

'IN FRONT OF THE ANT HOLE'

Dear Sir/Sirs,
In the 13th issue of AMIGA POWER I got my two free disks, one of the games was called *Sim Brick*. Inside the magazine you said you would not bother us with the instructions but I just CAN NOT get past the stone in front of the ant hole. Please could you tell me what I am doing wrong?
Thanks for reading, Miss C Littlewood, Stockton

PS I am sure a lot of other people are having the same problem and I think they would like it if you printed the instructions in the next issue.

'IMPROVE YOUR MAGAZINE'

Dear AP,
Here is a suggestion which would improve your magazine. Get rid of Do The Right Thing and replace it with something better (such as an advert). It may sound harsh, but it's the most dull and tedious letters page I've ever read. It may not be your fault but if it must stay, at least do something to improve it. How about shortening it or making up some of the letters yourself. There must be some readers who have something of interest to say.
Yours faithfully, Brian Jones, Bridgwater

Firstly, Brian, if ours is the dullest letters page you've ever read you obviously don't ever read any other magazines. Secondly, if you're so convinced that some readers have things of interest to say, why haven't you? And lastly, we'll leave the 'inventing letters' bit to others, thanks. Naming no names, of course...

'THANK GOODNESS FOR AMIGA ACTION'

Dear AMIGA POWER,
So, my family and I had just finished an excellent turkey dinner and wouldn't you know it, I had to go and make a large deposit at the porcelain bank. Might as well bring some reading material with me, I figured, as this could take a while. So I brought along the latest copies of AMIGA POWER and Amiga Action. So I'm reading away, and after a good half-hour it's time to leave. But wait – there's no toilet paper left! What's a guy to do? Thank goodness for Amiga Action.
Yours erm truly, Dallas James Parker, Winnipeg, Canada

'STARTING WORLD WAR III'

Dear AP,
I'm afraid this is going to be one of those long, discursive 'state-of-the-industry'-type letters, but bear with me, because I have a serious point to make.

If someone tells you that one of their favourite pastimes is playing computer games, what do you think? Well, YOU probably think it's a perfectly reasonable way of spending your spare time, but to the average man-on-the-street it conjures up one of two images. There is either the socially-retarded acne-ridden D&D fanatic *(Here we go again – Ed.)* trainspotting geek, or the moronic clinically-addicted 8-year-old Nintendo brat.

These two images come straight from the media coverage (or more importantly the lack of it) which computer gamesplayers are given. In TV shows and films, anyone who can operate a computer is about 14, called something like Melvin or Kevin, and can type instructions at about 800 words a minute into a computer that's capable of everything from making a cup of coffee to starting World War III. *(Yeah, Wargames was a great movie, wasn't it? – Ed.)* The only coverage computer games are given in the news is when some American professor discovers 'conclusive evidence' to show that computer games are responsible for underachievement, petty crime and/or serial numbers. *(? – Ed.)*

Up until recently, the only non-magazine stuff aimed at gamesplayers themselves were the rather half-hearted attempts on Saturday morning kids' shows, but as these were usually sandwiched between Thundercats and some fool pouring gunge over Timmy Mallet's head it's not surprising that they didn't reach a very wide audience.

And so I come, inevitably, to Gamesmaster. What a catalogue of wasted opportunities. What we get is about a minute-and-a-half of extremely dodgy game reviews ("And on the Nintendo it's *Extremely Dull And Derivative Platform Game*. Great fun, the best game I've played in ages: 96 percent") surrounded by pointless

AND ANOTHER THING...

• Well done to Matthew Addyman and Mark Porter for spotting that if you press F5 on the menu screen of our fab issue 13 coverdisk game *Mad Bomber*, the game plays a quick snatch of 'Holiday' by Madonna and skips you straight to level 13. It was certainly news to us...

• John Shields of Bordesley Green says 'Please could I have a signed photo of Stuart Campbell and Matthew Squires 'cos my sister fancies them'. John, your sister is completely mad.

• And on the subject of completely mad, several people wrote in predictably whinging about *Rainbow Islands* still being our all-time Number One, but since none of them had anything more interesting or original to say that 'It's crap', we're not going to print any of their names. Ha!

● And finally...
OH NO! YET MORE LEMMINGS!
KYLIE LEMMING – Same as a Blocker but uses bloody awful music to keep other Lemmings from their doom. *(The views of contributors do not necessarily reflect etc. – Ed.)*
ROBERT MAXWELL LEMMING – Throws itself into the nearest river, thus creating a sturdy bridge for the other Lemmings to use.
LAST NINJA LEMMING – Same as a normal Lemming but refuses to respond to your mouse controls, walking backwards at the wrong time, falling off cliffs etc.
KATE ADIE LEMMING – Looks for the nearest trap, throws itself in headfirst, yet still comes out alive.
DAN QUAYLE LEMMING – Strangely finds itself at the front of every Lemming group, testing new areas for hidden traps.
MAGIC POCKETS LEMMING – Same as a normal Lemming but moves at a quarter of the speed.
MAGGIE THATCHER LEMMING – Sends 98 percent of the Lemmings to their death, then gets John Major Lemming to help out and claims the glory for rescuing the last 2 percent.
Thanks to Paul Bisson of St Helier for those. Gave us a chuckle, anyway.

DO THE write THING

'Celebrity Challenges', a manic presenter whose excrutiating style ("Nudge nudge, wink wink, whip out your joystick, eh lads?") could only possibly appeal to socially-retarded teenage acne-ridden D&D fanatic trainspotting geeks or moronic clinically-addicted 8-year-old Nintendo brats (ring any bells?) and an audience composed of... well, guess who? Yes, it's our old friends the geeks and brats. Far from showing the unbelieving public that intelligent adults also play computer games, it just reinforced all the old stereotypes.

I read in AP13 that the BBC and ITV are planning their own games shows, so perhaps we do have something to thank Gamesmaster for: bringing the public interest in gamesplaying to the attention of the TV companies. I just hope and pray they don't follow the formula and dig up more geeks and brats.

Yours, Paul Hunter, Edinburgh

And there we'll leave the subject of Gamesmaster, I think. Letters defending the show against the barrage of criticism aimed at it in the last couple of issues were conspicuous by their absence, but I think what we said about it before still stands – yes, it's not the world's best TV show, you might even think it's a little crap(ish), but it's not really for the likes of us in the first place. The best news, as Paul noticed, is that the show's success with viewing figures might hopefully point other TV companies in the video game show direction, hopefully with slightly more grown-up results.

'A SUCKY KISS'

Dear AMIGA POWER,

Hello AMIGA POWER. I've stuck the F-19 on autopilot and I'm not scheduled to arrive at the primary target for another 31 minutes (flying stealthy you see) so I thought I'd take the time to write to you. I seem to be flying into the teeth of an SA-13 but we'll forget that for a minute.

Thank you very much for the demo of *Pinball Dreams*. It is utterly funky, the ultra-sexy cherry on top of an insanely erotic issue. *Wizkid* was only slightly less good in being a teeny weeny bit too short, but I don't like long demos very much any church so it kept me jammy dodger.

That *Rainbow Islands* must be a sucky kiss of a game to rank higher than *Speedball II*, eh? It's a sphacelating shame *(No, we don't know what this one means either – Ed.)* but I'm an impoverished student and can't afford it, but my thought was that being, as you doubtless are, witty, creative, generous, un-ugly people, you could seduce Ocean into giving you an extra review copy and then send it to me out of the charity of your hearts. Is that a rampant idea or what? Anyway, you all love me. *(It's true, we do – Ed.)*

Yeah, and I was really interested to read the *Ultima VI* review but not exactly moshing in the rafters at what you said about virtually needing a hard drive so is there anything similar I could play from floppy you can recommend? It's right up my neighbour's street, so if I can persuade her to buy it I can use theirs. Cunning, what?

Anyway, toodlepip lovies, I really must go. Thank you for reading thus far.

'What man has created
Man can destroy
Bring to light
That day of joy'

Philip Turner, Whitwell, York

PS You'll be glad to hear I was awarded a Congressional Medal Of Honour.

Oh well, you can pawn it and buy a copy of Rainbow Islands, *then.*

'PLEASE GIVE HIM A CHANCE'

Dear AP,

Being a great fan of *Kick Off 2*, and not 100 percent in agreement with *Rainbow Islands* being the best Amiga game ever (not even one percent in fact), I was of the opinion that Stuart Campbell was a total *(We can't print this word – Ed)*. Then I met him at the Amiga Shopper show. I would like to say to all the people who feel the way I did (and I know there's a lot of you), that he isn't. In fact, he's a good bloke. He has reasons for not liking *Kick Off 2*, and it's not as if he played it for five minutes and said 'This is crap'. He has given it a fair chance and still doesn't like it. So please everybody give him a chance and the respect he deserves.

Yours now liking Stuart Campbell, Paul Sheriffs, Northwood

Cheers, Gran – Stuart.

'REALLY BAD NIGHTMARE'

Dear AMIGA POWER,

I had this really bad nightmare the other week. I was standing in WH Smiths reading AP, and I dreamt that in the All-Time Top 100 chart, *Rainbow Islands* was still at the top. It was really terrible, everyone was laughing at AMIGA POWER for being so unrealistic. Amiga owners, the programmers, everyone stood there in hysterics. It was all so embarrassing. Thank God this could never actually happen – I mean what with all the great games that have come out since last time, there is just no way it could be at the top again. Phew. It's just that dream was so vivid. Spooky, huh?

A Partly Toasted Cheese Sarnie, Kent

'WIDE FAN BASE'

Dear AMIGA POWER,

What is this terrible aversion you seem to have towards football management games? I don't see why you were so surprised that Code Masters' *First Division Manager* was the top-selling game in a recent chart. To my knowledge football management games have always been popular and it is because they have such a wide fan base among the gaming fraternity. Let's face it *(Snip! – Ed.)*

Yours, Jonathan Wren, Ilford

And that's all folks! More next month.

AMIGA POWER COMPO WINNERS

A MILLION WAYS TO FLY

First up, here are the answers: 1) Chuck Yeager was the first man to break the speed of sound. 2) Captain A Roy Brown shot down the the Red Baron – not some Aussie geezer as some of you seemed to think. 3) Charles Lindbergh was the first chap to fly the Atlantic. 4) Captain W E Johns created the Biggles books. 5) Algy and Ginger were Biggles' two wizard chums. And the winners were: Peter Tucker of Ramsey on the Isle of Man; Peter Harrison of Byfleet, Surrey; S Hamilton from Stanley in County Durham; J Featherstone of Handforth in Cheshire and Martyn Reed from Kenley in Surrey.

And the 15 runners up: GJ Sadler of Reigate, Surrey; DJ O' Donnell from Stourbridge, West Midlands; M. Bloor of Downham, Kent; Ryan Martin Elliot from Cardcross in Dumbartonshire; Jo Dowley from London; Ian McCormick from Liverpool; Liam MacKenzie of Inverness; James Plant of Manchester; James Forington from Boston in Lincs; David Grimshaw of Guildford, Surrey; David Challinor of Bibury, Glos.; Ben King from Chelmsford, Essex; Christopher Gibbs from Sale, Cheshire; Paul Chapman from Peterborough, Cambs and S Jones from Stourbridge, West Midlands.

ISLANDS IN THE STREAM

The answer? South Ronaldsay is not a Pacific Island (it's off Scotland).

Hat and game winners: Richard Hood from Doncaster; Lee Hinkins from Huntingdon, Cambs; David Sayle of Liverpool; Graham Lally of Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey, and Derek Lloyd of Neath, West Glamorgan.

Hat only: Danny Coates from Canvey Island, Essex; J. Rae of Lincoln; D.J. Steers from Ashford, Kent; Darren Gray of Newton Aycliffe, County Durham and Jonathan Inns of Neston, South Wirral.

MARQUIS DE SADE

Answers: 1) 360 degrees. 2) Owl (we also accepted 'Wol', which was how he wrote it). 3) Nite Owl.

Winner: Chris Dunn from Edinburgh.

Runners up: Mike Bloor from Downham, Kent; Anita Jones of Caernaffon, Gwynedd; WJ Collins of Willenhall, West Midlands; Trish Collins, also from Willenhall, West Midlands; Miss P A Alldritt from Wolverhampton; Robin Jones of Bangor, Gwynedd; A Brumpton from Bridlington, E Yorks; Bill Collins from Wolverhampton; John Abbot from Harrogate, N Yorkshire and Nicholas Hillier from Trowbridge in Wiltshire.

I'VE GOT A GREEN CONSCIOUSNESS AND IT'S NOT JUST THE DRINK

Winner of the (much desired) office bin bag full of all our old rubbish – a truly crap prize – was 'lucky' Morgan Bowen from Milton Keynes.

NO SWEAT: THE JOHN MADDEN ANAGRAM COMPO

Winners: Emma J Keen from Sheffield, South Yorkshire, who came up with EMMA J COLD AND ALONE, NO FAB SHIRT.

Shirley Harrison, from Hull: OLD HAT MADE FROM CANNIBAL JONES.

Alistair Sturrock from Stevenston, Ayrshire came up with STOLEN FOODJAR CHINAMAN BLAMED.

Dale Gregory from Newquay, Cornwall, whose answer was LAST BOHEMIAN MANACLED ON FJORD.

And finally, the terminally crap James Mountford from Solihull, West Midlands, who appears to have just randomly rearranged the letters to get HJNO DSAEDNRN MAIACE TLOAFOBL. Completely useless, we know, but he gets something because it made us laugh.

Lots more winners next month!

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THE BOTTOM LINE

Yes, it's time to completely revamp The Bottom Line – Britain's most complete guide to old games – from top to bottom. In our new version you get mini-reviews of every major game reviewed in AMIGA POWER over the last 10 months, plus more facts and figures than ever before.

REVIEWER'S INDEX

AI - Andy Ide
CC - Colin Campbell
DG - Dave Golder
GP - Gary Penn
JD - Jonathan Davies
KF - Karl Foster
MB - Matt Bielby
MR - Mark Ramshaw
MS - Matthew Squires
NW - Neil West
RP - Rich Pelley
SC - Stuart Campbell

THE ALL NEW BOTTOM LINE

(AND HOW TO UNDERSTAND IT)

★★★★★ Excellent ★★★★★ Nearly there ★★★★ Very good
★★★ Has its moments ★★ Flawed ★ Dire

The whole point of this new Bottom Line is to cram even more information into less space. Here's how it works...

The top bit is easy:
GAME NAME
Publisher Price

Then we get (just for your information really) the issue of AMIGA POWER the game was originally reviewed in, the mark it got at the time and the reviewer's initials. If the game appeared in our new, updated All-time Top 100 Games, its position comes next, followed by the new mini-review and a new rating out of five stars (with red ones for real 'must buys'.) And there you have it – all you could ever need to know about just about every full price game you're even slightly likely to think about buying.

ABANDONED PLACES
Electronic Zoo £29.99

AP11 80% KF
Definitely one of the biggest RPGs you'll ever play, but as you might expect, that means an awful lot of fiddling about with disks. It looks a bit tacky too, but you certainly get plenty of game for your money. ★★★★

THE ADDAMS FAMILY
Ocean £25.99
AP14 88% MB
Highly simplified *Mario* clone, but no less playable for all that. Huge and tough, and while it looks a bit bare in places, there's no shortage of things going on. A goody for sure. ★★★★★

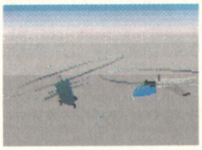
ADVANTAGE TENNIS
Infogrames £25.99
AP12 69% DG
We're still waiting for the definitive Amiga tennis game. This is up there with the best of the contenders, but poor controls let it down. ★★★

THE ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH
Sierra £34.99
AP12 69% MR
Great plot with some genuinely funny touches of humour, but the game itself is disappointingly straightforward and linear. For £35, it's a bit short on depth to justify buying. ★★★

AGONY
Psygnosis £25.99

AP13 78% SC
The mellowest shoot-'em-up around, with stunning graphics and relaxed, blissed-out gameplay (but utterly tragic music). The six levels won't take you long to get through, though, so watch out if you're after a real challenge. ★★★★

AH37-M THUNDERHAWK
Core £30.99



AP5 86% JD T100 No.67
A helicopter flight sim that's really more of a straight arcade blaster, with loads of action but not much to look at. The mouse control is a little shaky, but this is excellent fun all the same. ★★★★

ALCATRAZ
Infogrames £25.99
AP13 73% NW
A bit of a pain in one-player mode (you have to play two characters simultaneously), but much more fun with a chum around, this maze game/shoot-'em-up is atmospheric and addictive, if not the biggest thing you'll ever see. Not bad. ★★★

ALIEN BREED
Team 17 £25.99
AP8 82% RP
Ultra-slick *Gauntlet* clone – it gets a bit repetitive but there's loads of top slimy-slaughtering fun to be had beforehand. Not much evidence of one meg being used though. ★★★

ALIEN STORM
US Gold £25.99

AP9 44% NW
Imagine something as simple as *Golden Axe* without the clever sophisticated stuff. Yep, it's really that dreadful. ★

ALTERED DESTINY
Accolade £29.99
AP7 73% JD
Technically it's pretty grim, but a decent enough adventure game beneath the peeling wallpaper and flaking paint on the surface. A long way short of fabulous, though – ultimately it's just another average adventure. ★★★

AMERICAN FOOTBALL COACH
Composer Software £14.95
AP14 21% NW
John Madden Football without the groovy graphics, exciting strategy/arcade blend, competent programming and everything else. ★

AMNIOS
Psygnosis £25.99
AP9 76% MR
Inspired by arcade classics *Defender* and *Sinistar*, but this omni-directional-scrolling blaster is over-fast, under-controllable and graphically very cluttered. Reasonable fun, but utterly forgettable. ★★★

ANOTHER WORLD
US Gold £25.99

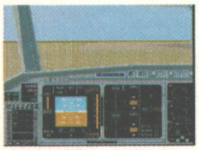
AP10 89% MR T100 No.20
Okay, so you'll finish it in a couple of days, but this is absolutely gorgeous stuff, playable and different with an atmosphere all its own. Every new screen is an exciting discovery, and while quantity may be lacking, there's no doubting this one's quality. ★★★★★

APIDYA
Play Byte £25.99

AP13 89% MR T100 No.25
We can't agree whether this is the best Amiga horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up ever or only the second-best, but it's definitely completely excellent, so why are you reading this instead of going out to the shops to buy it right now? Eh? ★★★★★

ARMALYTE
Thalamus £25.99
AP5 58% CC
...Whereas if you've got this one, we'd advise you to go out to the shops and demand your money back immediately. Ridiculously hard to the point of being unplayable, *Armalyte* is one game that shouldn't have bothered making the trip across from the C64. ★★

A320 AIRBUS
Thalion £29.99

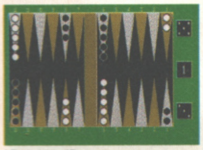


AP13 66% DG
You know how people say that if you want to play arcade games, you must have a console? Horrific image-wrecking trainspotter guff like this is the reason why. If you want to fly, go in a plane, don't buy an Amiga. 'Realistic'? Well maybe, but who cares? ★

BABY JO
Loriciels £24.99

AP8 49% MB
It's after you've played *A320 Airbus* that *Baby Jo* starts to look not quite so bad after all. It's a bit primitive and a bit simplistic, but it's cute and it's got a sense of humour, and you can do a lot worse than that in this world. ★★

BACKGAMMON ROYALE
Oxford Softworks £19.99



AP12 45% JD
Too thin a game to justify this price, and no use as a learning tool thanks to the horrible, confusing instruction manual. Buy a real Backgammon set, it's better and cheaper. ★

BARBARIAN 2
Psygnosis £25.99

AP9 68% SC
Too little too late, this pretty little arcade adventure is completely lacking in action or challenge. Unless you found *Shadow Of The Beast* a bit too complicated for your liking, you'll get bored very swiftly. ★★★

BATTLE CHESS II – CHINESE CHESS
Electronic Arts £25.99
AP5 48% CC
Looks very sweet, but *Chinese Chess* just isn't as appealing as the traditional 'Western'-style version to most tastes. Ultimately just a little too clever for its own good. ★★

BATTLE ISLE
Ubi Soft £29.99

AP9 78% SC
A really nice idea, with an excellent control interface, but it falls at the last hurdle thanks to some enormous delays during play and a badly thought-out combat system. There's the germ of a real classic in here, though. ★★★

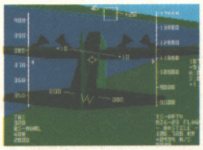
BEAST BUSTERS
Activision £25.99
AP4 62% SC
One of the best arcade *Op Wolf* clones, but a weedy and timid conversion that somehow manages to include all the coin-op's features but none of the gleeful fun. ★★

BIG BUSINESS
Magic Bytes £25.99
AP6 40% JD
A funny business simulation? Well, yes, but the funny bits aren't very funny and the business bits are completely tedious. It's an original idea, but unfortunately it's not a very *good* original idea. ★

BIG RUN
Storm £25.99
AP11 61% DG
With *Lotus II*, *Vroom*, and *Lotus I* on budget, do you really need this third-rate conversion of a second-rate arcade driving game? No, we didn't think so. ★★

BILLIARDS II SIMULATOR
Infogrames £25.99
AP5 47% JD
Well, it's not bad, but it's not *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker*, is it? 'Crazy Pool' on an octagonal table is quite a laugh, but not really enough. ★★

BIRDS OF PREY
Electronic Arts £34.99



AP9 81% JD
Incredibly detailed and comprehensive, but the incredibly slow frame update gets in the way just too much for all but the real flight game purist. Lots to see and do (and shoot) if you're really patient though. ★★★

BLACK CRYPT
Electronic Arts £25.99

AP11 85% GP
Real RPG devotees don't seem to go for it – preferring the likes of the *Beholder* games, but there appears to be something about this one which draws in the uninitiated. It's nothing new, but give it a try – you might like it... ★★★

BLADE WARRIOR
Image Works £25.99
AP5 77% JD
Exceptionally atmospheric silhouette graphics, but slightly thin in the gameplay stakes. Still a cut above the average arcade adventure, though. ★★★

THE BLUES BROTHERS
Titus £25.99

AP7 87% SC T100 No.26
Funny, addictive, colossally playable, crisp and beautiful-looking, gorgeously presented, excellently-designed and magnificently-written. But that's enough about AMIGA POWER, *The Blues Brothers* is fab as well. Our favourite character licence game ever. ★★★★★

BONANZA BROS
US Gold £25.99

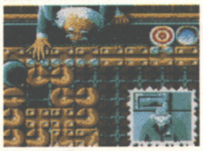
AP9 81% GP
Good conversion of the coin-op, but for some reason it's just not as lovable on home computer formats. Two-player mode is really good fun, but in solo mode it's lacking a bit. A touch slow, and the 10 levels can be played through in no time. ★★★

BOOLY
Loriciels £19.99
AP8 64% MB
Characterful and imaginative little thing, but you really need to force yourself to play it properly. It's quite engrossing, but it's never going to be a No.1. ★★★

BOROBODUR
Thalamus £25.99

AP11 34% SC
Really awful platform game, tied onto reasonably neat driving section which isn't good enough to suffer the horrors before it for. Really badly programmed too. ★

BOSTON BOMB CLUB
Silmarils £25.99



AP7 78% MB
One of the better puzzle games we've seen, with lots of character and a simple but addictive idea neatly executed. Like most puzzlers, you'll get bored after a while, though. ★★★

BRAIN BLASTERS
Ubi Soft £25.99
AP7 32% SC
Remember that old parlour game where you got shown a tray full of odd objects for 30 seconds and then had to remember what they all were? Well, now it's on the Amiga for £26. Isn't technology wonderful? ★

BREACH 2 (ENHANCED)
Impressions £29.99

AP10 60% RP
Spectrum-quality graphics, but a more entertaining game than many in the RPG genre. £30 is just silly, though. ★★★

BRIDES OF DRACULA
Gonzo Games £25.99
AP13 59% MS
Astoundingly crude technically, the execution and some elementary design flaws ruin what might have been some top *Spy vs Spy*-esque vampire antics. ★

BRIGADE COMMANDER
Electronic Zoo £25.99
AP4 68% JD
More accessible and playable than most wargames we see, and a topical scenario, but the same shabby presentation as usual. Why can't someone write a wargame with decent graphics, just once? ★★★

BUILDERLAND
Loriciel £24.99
AP8 63% MB
Potentially groovy *Lemmings*-type effort, but it's a shame it appears to have been programmed in AMOS. Still quite playable, but too primitive to really hold your attention. ★★★

CAPTAIN PLANET
Mindscape £25.99
AP8 43% NW
Really tragic platform atrocity licensed from one of the lamest cartoon heroes in living memory. Shoddily put-together and a complete waste of a potentially good design. ★

THE CARDINAL OF THE KREMLIN
Accolade £24.99
AP4 51% CC
Utterly puzzling arcade blasting section slapped arbitrarily into the middle of the game wrecks what was shaping up to be an absorbing and interesting political strategy game. Shoot the designer. ★★

CARDIAXX
Electronic Zoo £25.99
AP9 59% SC
It's nice to see someone try to do a *Defender* for the '90s, but not so nice when it turns out to be as characterless and unplayable as this. Wildly over-sensitive and illogical in play. ★

CASTLES
Interplay £29.99

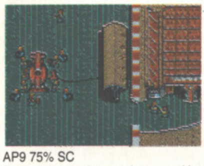
AP13 58% KF
Could-have-been-fun attempt at a *Sim City*-style epic with castles (surprise!) in it, but it's all too painfully slow and it doesn't even balance the lack of speed with any real depth or realism. ★★

CELTIC LEGENDS
Ubi Soft £30.99

AP9 89% KF T100 No.27
Fans of the 8-bit classic *Chaos* will find that this is the closest the Amiga's yet come to emulating that game's timeless appeal, but with added depth and strategy. A little on the slow side, but enormously compelling and enjoyable. ★★★★★

CHALLENGE GOLF
On-Line £24.99
AP4 45% SC
PGA Tour Golf – it's slick and superbly playable. *MicroProse Golf* – it's technically stunning and very realistic. *Challenge Golf* – it's tacky, crap-looking, and has a set of physics laws all its own. Total rubbish. ★

CHAMPION DRIVER
Idea £25.99



AP9 75% SC
Fast and smooth cross between *Hot Rod* and *Super Sprint*, this is pretty shallow stuff but it's one of the most enjoyable Amiga driving games you'll see all the same. Good achievement/reward balance too. ★★★★

CHAMPION OF THE RAJ
Image Works £25.99
AP4 57% JD
The kind of thing that got the Amiga a bad name in 1988 looks even worse in 1991. Dreadfully slow, and deeply uneventful even when it isn't accessing the disk. Luckily Image Works have gone bust, so you probably won't be able to buy it even if you're stupid enough to try. ★

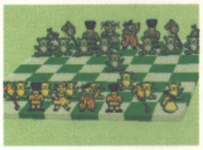
CHAOS IN ANDROMEDA
On-Line £24.99
AP4 68% RP
The poor man's *Ultima VI*, except you have to be a pretty well-off poor man to fork out £25 on an inferior copy like this. Alright, but go for the real thing, it's worth the few quid extra. ★★

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE
Impressions £29.99

AP5 68% JD
Hey, someone's done that wargame with pretty graphics. Unfortunately, they've cocked up the actual wargame bit with some strange and silly rules, but this is still fairly lively, comparatively speaking. ★★★

CHE: GUERILLA IN BOLIVIA
CCS £25.99
AP10 34% RP
About as up-to-date as Che himself. Forget it. ★

CHESS CHAMPION 2175
Oxford Softworks £19.99



AP12 80% KF
Millions of options, loads of difficulty settings, easy to get into, good-looking and instructive, this is almost certainly the best Amiga chess game yet. ★★★★

CISCO HEAT
Image Works £25.99

AP10 66% SC
It's hard to tell if the programmers ever played the coin-op this is supposedly based on, but it's not a bad little arcade driving game in its own right. Then again, it's not exactly good, either. ★★★

CONFLICT MIDDLE EAST
SSI/US Gold £30.99
AP5 68% SM
Ho hum, it's yet another strictly-for-the-diehards wargame. Crap graphics, lots of technically accurate data about tanks and stuff, you know the drill by now. ★★★

COVER GIRL POKER
Emotional Pictures/Storm £25.99
AP13 6% MR
A completely amazing game. You'll be amazed at the poor-quality pictures, astounded by the appallingly tacky dialogue, and utterly staggered at how unbelievably bad it is at poker. If you own it, kill yourself. ★

COVERT ACTION
MicroProse £34.99
AP8 81% SC T100 No. 99
Ridiculously expensive but very atmospheric spy 'simulator', with lots of little sub-games (some of which are actually enjoyable in their own right, shock horror) actually going together to make a cohesive whole. Shame about that price, though. ★★★★

CRIME CITY
If... £25.99

AP11 30% GP
Nice detective murder-mystery idea, but useless plot development and unpleasant user interface. This could have been good, if only it had had a bit of atmosphere to it. ★

CRIME DOES NOT PAY
Titus £25.99
AP6 13% CC
Really horrible beat-'em-up/shoot-'em-up/bin-'em-up rubbish with a dubious Mafia-based plotline. Crap in almost every meaningful way. ★

CRIME TIME
Starbyte £25.99
AP9 32% RP
Hopeless adventure game, old-fashioned and unoriginal. Really, with the likes of *Monkey Island* around, we don't quite understand why people bother releasing this kind of drivel at all. ★

CRUISE FOR A CORPSE
Delphine/US Gold £27.99

AP6 87% MR T100 No.54
Now this is much more like it. Superbly put-together and carefully-designed, this is one of the top five adventures of all time. An awful lot of disk accessing and swapping, but for once it's almost worth putting up with. ★★★★★

DARKMAN
Ocean £25.99
AP6 59% SC
The absolute nadir of the 'multiple-sub-games-movie-licence' genre (well, except for *Total Recall*, maybe), *Darkman* is shallow, repetitive, boring and completely lacking the need for any skill whatsoever. And that's just the good bits. ★

DEATHBRINGER
Empire £25.99
AP9 54% SC
Wildly impressive 32-level parallax, but there's nothing else to it at all. Even the gameplay that there is (simple hack'n'slash stuff) isn't very well-executed. More of a demo than a game. ★★

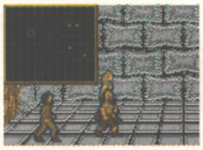
DEATH KNIGHTS OF KRYNN
SSI/US Gold £25.99
AP7 60% SC
First the good news – this isn't nearly as hateful as *Secret Of The Silver Blades*. Now the bad news – it isn't nearly as good as *Deathbringer*. ★

DELIVERANCE
21st Century Entertainment £25.99
AP14 75% JD
Cruder, more colourful version of *Gods*, without the depth but with a bit more zing to it. ★★★

DINO WARS
Magic Bytes £25.99
AP6 45% RP
Cute variation on chess, especially the two-player 'not-waiting-for-the-other-player-to-move' version, but the central beat-'em-up bit is crap and the game's a bit thin for almost £26. ★★

DOUBLE DRAGON III
Storm £25.99
AP9 29% SC
While the first two *Double Dragon* games were simplistic and over-easy, at least they looked quite nice. This is much less complex than either of those, and a lot uglier too. ★

DRAGON FIGHTER
Idea £25.99



AP9 56% JD
Novel mix of two styles (*R-Type*ish shoot-'em-up and strategy game), but neither section has been very well executed. The whole thing is pretty slick, but there's nothing much here to keep you entertained for long. ★★

DREADNOUGHTS
Turcan Research Systems £34.95
AP14 80% JD
A naval strategy wargame that Jonathan liked? Nurse! ★★★★

DYNA BLASTER
Ubi Soft £30.99

AP12 83% MB T100 No.13
Good fun by itself, but play this in five-player mode (with the joystick adaptor included) and you'll find entire days disappearing from your life at a time. If you've got any friends at all, this is a complete and utter must. ★★★★★

ELF
Ocean £25.99
AP5 73% CC
Old-fashioned platform arcade adventure, with over-fussy graphics and uneventful gameplay. A certain twee charm, but nothing you'd actually want to pay money for (unless you enjoy giving the stuff away). ★★

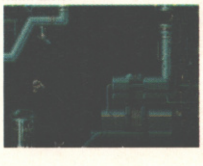
ELVIRA – THE ARCADE GAME

Flair £25.99
AP10 70% NW
Sort of like a prettier but much cruder version of *Gods*. Not bad, but not exactly thrilling, it's yet another of those 'okayish' jobs (you should know the drill by now). ★★★

ELVIRA II: THE JAWS OF CEREBUS
Accolade £34.99

AP13 33% GP
Totally dull and unexciting (surely the very last thing a game about the larger-than-life Elvira should be) million-disk adventure, and shockingly priced. ★

THE EXECUTIONER
Hawk £25.99



AP5 55% SC
Pretty dodgy attempt at capturing the classic style of the *Thrust* games of days gone by. Torture section is unpleasant and gratuitous. ★★

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER II
SSI/US Gold £35.99
AP14 86% KF
Nothing here that wasn't in the first (classic) game, but generally done that little bit better. Think carefully before buying both, though. ★★★★

FACE OFF
Krisalis £25.99

AP9 60% SC
Manchester United Europe on ice, but less fun. About as good as Amiga ice hockey gets at the moment, though. ★★★

FALLING JEWELS
Soft & Easy £25.99
AP10 66% GP
Very rough-looking but sneakily likeable clone of the Sega *Tetris* clone *Columns*. You could do worse (like any of the official Amiga *Tetris* games, for example). ★★★

FANTASTIC VOYAGE
Centaur £25.99
AP10 77% RP
Average shoot-'em-up distinguished by a rather lovely lighting effect which lends the game a charming atmosphere, albeit without adding anything to the hackneyed design. ★★★

FATE – GATES OF DAWN
Rainbow Arts £29.99

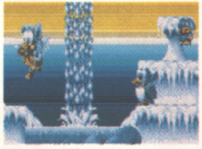
AP8 70% JD
Finicky and tatty FRPG, although it's got some cute babes in it. ★★

FINAL BLOW
Storm £25.99

AP9 33% SC
Astonishingly shallow even for a boxing game, you'll spend half-an-hour completing this and the rest of your life regretting buying it in the first place. So don't. ★

FINAL FIGHT
US Gold £25.99
AP6 82% GP T100 No.80
Very close conversion of one of the few half-decent arcade beat-'em-ups, and probably the only Amiga game in the genre (apart from *IK+*) that's worth playing at all. A couple of minor features missing, but basically really good stuff. ★★★★

FIRE AND ICE
Renegade £25.99



AP14 88% MR
Magic Pockets, but fast and good. ★★★★★

FIRETEAM 2200
Internecine £29.99

AP13 31% DG
Quite breathtakingly horrid-looking, and seriously dull to boot. Just another wargame, really. ★

FIRST SAMURAI
Ubi Soft (with Mega lo Mania) £30.99

AP8 91% SC T100 No.14
One of the most beautifully-constructed and playable arcade adventures the world's ever seen, with truly stunning sound into the bargain. This is the way it should be done, always. ★★★★★

FLOOR 13
Virgin £30.99
AP14 75% MS
Tense and spooky sim of a covert department of our own secret service. Extremely plausible, and wonderfully gripping, if a bit on the expensive side for a game with no colour or moving graphics. ★★★★

FOOTBALL DIRECTOR II
D&H £24.99
AP8 55% CC
Zzzz. ★

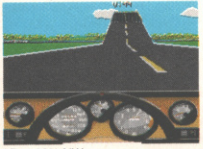
FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX
MicroProse £34.99

AP7 92% GP T100 No.2
Probably the most stunning technical achievement seen in Amiga games programming to date, but more importantly, a superbly and endlessly playable game to boot. Monstrously impressive in every way – buy this or we'll shoot you. ★★★★★

4D SPORTS BOXING
Mindscape £25.99

AP9 40% GP
The fourth dimension is, er, really slow and jerky movement and complete boredom. ★

4D SPORTS DRIVING
Mindscape £25.99



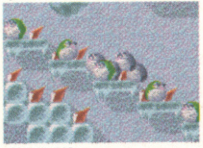
AP11 69% NW
A quite neat *Race Drivin'* clone, somewhat spoiled by the really clumsy and thoughtless approach to disk swapping. ★★★

FLAMES OF FREEDOM – MIDWINTER II
MicroProse £34.99
AP6 80% MB
Weeks and weeks of exploring, but the shaky and inconsistent game logic blows the atmosphere a bit. Falls between the two stools of action game and strategy epic a little awkwardly. ★★★

FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER
Image Works £30.99
AP8 83% JD
Surprisingly enjoyable and zappy flight sim based on one of the US Navy's clunkier old airborne warhorses, which is perhaps where the game's quirky character comes from. ★★★★

FRENETIC
Core Design £20.99
AP4 59% SC
Xenon 2 without the fabulous music. ★★

FUZZBALL
System 3 £19.99



AP9 80% MS
This *Bubble Bobble*-esque arcade platformer is almost there, but the stupid control and sky-high difficulty puts a very hefty spanner in its works. Could have been great, but isn't. ★★★

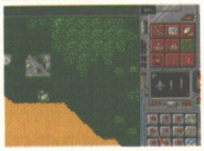
GAUNTLET III
US Gold £25.99
AP5 67% JD
Interesting attempt to do something new with the formula, but it loses the original's single-minded sense of purpose as well as some of the action. ★★★

GEISHA
Tomahawk £25.99

AP6 5% GP
Spectacularly awful mishmash of half-a-dozen game styles, executed with a breathtaking lack of competence, with a truly tasteless plot slapped on top. We admit it, we over-rated this one. ★

GHOST BATTLE
Thalion £25.53
AP4 38% SC
Ghosts'N'Goblins, but completely rubbish. ★

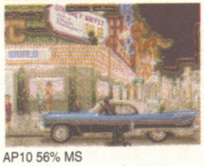
GLOBAL EFFECT
Millennium £29.99



AP13 60% JD
Sim City goes Green, but doesn't quite cut it gameplay and control interface-wise. Some very poor design logic makes it something of a chore. ★★

GO
Oxford Softworks £19.99
AP12 80% SC
Unsophisticated but workable version of one of the true (and often ignored) classics of boardgaming. 100 skill levels and a handicapping system gives everyone the chance to play this absorbing and challenging game. ★★★★

THE GODFATHER
US Gold £30.99



AP10 56% MS
The Godfather saga –just try to imagine how much potential there is for a really great game in there. Then look at this godawful witless *RoboCop* clone and cry for a day and a half. ★

GOLDEN EAGLE
Loriciel £28.99

AP10 55% JD
Icky *Rolling Thunder* playalike with cute animation but no noticeable gameplay. ★

GRAEME SOUNESS VECTOR SOCCER
Impulze £25.99
AP10 32% SC
A brave effort, but while the vector graphics work pretty well, the soccer bit fails miserably. File under 'nice try, no cigar'. ★

GREAT NAPOLEONIC BATTLES
Impressions £29.99
AP10 63% RP
Duff wargame with a built-in editor so you can actually make it as much fun as you want! Allegedly. ★★

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE
Kingsoft £25.99

AP9 65% MS
Kind of like a more expensive version of *The New Zealand Story* with Vikings in it. Surprisingly enough, less cute. ★★★

HALLS OF MONTEZUMA
Electronic Arts £25.99
AP4 61% JD
Millions of scenarios, but grotesquely unfriendly and complicated to anyone but diehard devotees. ★★

HARE RAISING HAVOC
Disney £25.99
AP12 28%SC/68% MR
It looks nice, but there's about as much gameplay in here as there is in a big empty box marked 'Gameplay-Free Zone'. If you've got a hard drive (and you can't play this any other way), don't waste its memory space. ★

HARLEQUIN
Gremlin £25.99

AP11 91% SC T100 No.15
One of the most complete, entertaining, addictive and imaginative games of any kind ever seen on the Amiga, *Harlequin* is a tour de force of programming and design. Platforms and spacehoppers have never been so much fun. ★★★★★

HARPOON (WITH BATTLESET II)
Electronic Arts £34.99

AP11 64% JD
Phenomenally detailed, but you'll have to be a retired Admiral to have enough time on your hands to play it properly. ★★

HEARTS OF CHINA
Sierra £34.99
AP10 84% MR
Lots better than most recent Sierra efforts, but still very linear, and if you haven't got one meg and a hard drive, forget it completely. ★★★★

HEIMDALL
Core Design £30.99

AP8 86% MB T100 No.46
If you're fed up of appallingly tatty RPGs, why not show some programmers this? Accessible, playable, gorgeous to look at, but still holding plenty of depth and challenge, this is the way the genre should be going. ★★★★★

HERO QUEST: RETURN OF THE WITCHLORD
Gremlin £14.99
AP7 80% JD
A clutch of new levels for the pretty groovy board game conversion. Nothing remarkable, but it certainly extends the game's life. ★★★

HOME ALONE
Accolade £24.99
AP10 48% RP
Almost as irritating as Macaulay Culkin. ★

HOT RUBBER
Palace £25.99

AP14 50% GP
Completely take-it-or-leave-it motorbike racer that looks pretty sad next to *Vroom* and *Super Hang-On*. ★★

HUDSON HAWK
Ocean £25.99
AP7 75% SC
Almost a prototype *Titus The Fox*, this is an almost-great cartoon platform effort ruined by a hideously unfriendly inertia-heavy control system. Still more cohesive and enjoyable than the usual movie licence game, though. ★★★

HUNTER
Activision £25.99

AP4 85% JD T100 No.24
Technically a wow, but beyond the impressive 3D visuals there's actually a seriously groovy arcade adventure lurking, just itching for a chance to hook you completely. If you can find it, buy it. ★★★★★

INDY HEAT
Storm £25.99

AP11 63% SC
A very good conversion of the arcade game, but it's too just easy and it lacks the addictive life of *Super Off Road*. Excellent fun with a couple of friends round all the same, though. ★★★

INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ATHLETICS
Hawk £25.99
AP5 59% CC
Crude and old-fashioned joystick-waggling sports sim it may be, but somehow it manages to be quite good fun for a bit. Really tacky, but you can't help loving it. Worth £26 in the same way that Gazza's worth five million quid, ie not. ★★★

JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER
Virgin £30.99
AP4 90% CC T100 No.10
Could a sport be recreated more perfectly on a computer than this? We don't think so. Apart from the crap ball-potting sound effect, we can't find any flaws in this magnificent snooker epic whatsoever. Absolutely wonderful. ★★★★★

JOHN BARNES EUROPEAN FOOTBALL
Krisalis £25.99
AP14 74% GP
A very similar game in play to *Manchester United Europe*, but the tiny area of pitch visible on screen cuts down the tactical scope dramatically, although it bumps the speed up significantly. Good fun, but shallow. ★★★

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL
Electronic Arts £25.99

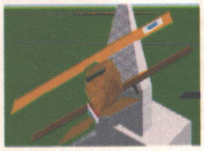
AP11 90% NW T100 No.23
Limited entertainment with a single player, but one of the most involving, absorbing and hugely playable two-player games ever. Only for fans of the sport, though. ★★★★★

KID GLOVES 2
Millennium £25.99

AP10 58% SC
Something of a wasted licence – this actually used to be called *Little Beau*, but had the *Kid* name tacked on at the last minute to no great effect. Essentially *Super Wonder Boy*, but a bit more crude. Very average. ★★★

KNIGHTMARE
Mindscape £30.99
AP9 74% MR
Something of another wasted licence, with all the potential of the TV show passed over in favour of, basically, a rewrite of Tony Crowther's earlier game *Captive*. It's all very clever, but the atmosphere just isn't really there. Very tough too. ★★★

KNIGHTS OF THE SKY
MicroProse £34.99



AP8 87% JD T100 No. 9
This is what it's really all about in the flight sim department. You can keep your *F-15*s and your *A320 Airbuses*, *Knights Of The Sky* captures the daredevil feel of the magnificent men of WW1 perfectly, with glorious dogfighting and lots of tricky missions. No collection should be without it. ★★★★★

KING'S BOUNTY
New World Computing £25.99
AP6 84% SC
It's worryingly rare that we see a strategy RPG type of thing that's actually been written by someone who can program properly, but this one certainly fits the bill. Accessible (our favourite word at the moment) and fun but still with plenty of depth, try this one out. ★★★★

KING'S QUEST V
Sierra £39.99

AP7 83% MR
Pretty impressive adventuring stuff, and graphically excellent too, but once more this is for hard drive owners or the unbelievably patient only. ★★★★

LAST NINJA 3
System 3 £35.99

AP7 80% SC
Not quite as unplayable as the previous games in the *Last Ninja* series, but still a bit of a nightmare in the control department. More technically advanced, but pretty deficient character-wise, this just doesn't really grab you. ★★★

LEANDER
Psygnosis £25.99

AP10 83% MR T100 No.56
Slick, smooth and highly professional platforming antics – a bit on the generic side, but no less enjoyable for that. Plenty of it too. ★★★★

LEGEND
Mindscape £30.99
AP14 91% KF
An RPG that's got everyone in the AMIGA POWER office playing it has to be something pretty special, and that's just what this is. Well-balanced and easy to get into, we can't think of a single serious flaw. ★★★★★

LEISURE SUIT LARRY 5
Sierra £34.99
AP11 50% KF
The kind of thing that makes buying a Super NES suddenly seem like a really good idea. Inept, unfair, morally-dubious, and about as nice to look at as your average motorway pile-up. Face it, it's rubbish. ★

LIVING JIGSAWS
Miles Computing £24.99
AP5 36% CC
Computer jigsaws? Yeah, right. Someone's pulling your leg, no? Well, no they're not. And yes, it is as stupid an idea as it sounds. Buy some proper jigsaws and get away from that monitor for a while instead. You know it makes sense. ★

LORD OF THE RINGS
Electronic Arts £29.99
AP9 63% MR
Very atmospheric, with a friendly control interface, but the Amiga really creaks as it tries to keep it all going. Only for those who aren't in a hurry. ★★★

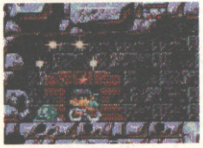
LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE II
Gremlin £25.99
AP7 87% CC T100 No.42
There's still a powerful office lobby that says this game isn't as good as *Lotus 1*, but nobody's arguing with the fact that this is an excellent and superbly-executed racing thriller. Consider *Vroom* first, though. ★★★★

MADDOG WILLIAMS
Game Crafters £30.99

AP12 47% JD
Stupendously run-of-the-mill Sierra-game clone that's more 'average' than actual 'crap' – but why not blow your £31 on something that's actually 'good'? ★★

MAGIC GARDEN
Electronic Zoo £25.99
AP9 55% MB
Novel 'keep-the-garden-functioning-by-doing-ten-things-at-once' idea, but in action it simply doesn't grab you. You can't, indeed, see the wood for the twee. (Sorry, that was too good not to use again...) ★★

MAGIC POCKETS
Renegade £25.99



AP6 75% MB
The game that made *Gods* look varied and exciting, *Magic Pockets* showed that the Bitmap Brothers weren't infallible after all. Dull and fiddly to play, it's not actually dreadful but it was certainly a colossal disappointment. Boring, basically. ★★★

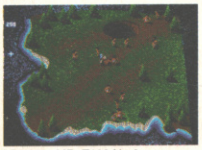
THE MANAGER
US Gold £25.99
AP14 36% SC
Everything that's tedious and inept about football management games can be found in this hopeless pile of old nob. A million statistic screens and incomprehensible icons make *The Manager* knuckle-chewingly painful to play, with no redeeming features at all. Avoid desperately. ★

MANCHESTER UNITED EUROPE
Krisalis £25.99

AP4 81% CC T100 No.70
Until recently the Amiga's most playable footy sim, and although it's since been overtaken by several more advanced titles, this is still lots of fun. A budget re-release soon seems inevitable, and if it happens, don't miss it. ★★★★

THE MED CONFLICT – BATTLESET 3
Electronic Arts £14.99
AP12 65% JD
Oh, please. This is such a specialist naval wargamer's thing that we seriously doubt a single one of our readers is in the slightest bit interested in it. Prove us wrong (all you Village People fans). ★★

MEGA LO MANIA
Ubi Soft (with First Samurai) £30.99



AP5 90% MR T100 No.6
The second part of the bargain of the year, this fun strategy wargame (no, that's not a contradiction in terms) is one of the most infuriatingly addictive experiences you'll ever have in front of an Amiga. A bona fide classic, this was the first game to really put the Sensible boys in the spotlight. ★★★★★

MERCENARY III
Novagen £29.99
AP10 50% KF
Disappointingly lacklustre sequel to the pretty entertaining previous two *Mercenary* games. Looks dreadful and there's not a lot to do. ★★

METAL MUTANT
Silmarils £25.99
AP5 78% AI
Vaguely interesting beat-'em-up/strategy effort – it doesn't do much and doesn't do what it *does* do in any remarkable ways. ★★★

MICROPROSE GOLF
MicroProse £34.99
AP8 84% SC T100 No.50
Lovely 3D golf sim with lots of frills, but the core of the gameplay isn't all it should be, and it's sort of embarrassing watching the Amiga simply throw away the bits of screen it can't cope with moving around. ★★★★

MIG-29M SUPER FULCRUM
Domark £39.99
AP7 80% CC
Wildly over-priced and over-serious sim that needs a lot more action and a bit more interesting scenery if it's going to get people to fork out 40 quid for it. ★★

MOONSTONE
Mindscape £30.99

AP9 73% NW
Well, being able to alter the level of goriness is a nice touch. This RPG hack-'em-up looks good, but the game doesn't flow and it's not as involved as it'd have you believe. ★★★

MOONBASE
Mindscape £35.99
AP4 69% JD
Sim City on the moon, but less fun, less immediate and a lot more expensive. Even after all this time, you're a lot better off with the real thing. ★★★

MONSTER BUSINESS
Eclipse £19.99

AP6 80% SC T100 No.98
Look beyond the tacky graphics of *Monster Business* and you'll find a superb platform game in the classic arcade tradition. *Manic Miner* meets *Dig Dug* and has a completely brilliant time, we think. ★★★★

NAVY SEALS
Ocean £25.99
AP4 61% SC
A bit lifeless and nothing much to do with the film, but still quite a playable and addictive platform arcade game. Unsophisticated and technically iffy, this is the kind of thing the phrase 'Well, it's not bad' was invented for. ★★★

NAPOLEON 1
Internecine £29.99
AP8 39% JD
Aaaaarrrrggghhhh! ★

NEBULUS 2 – POGO A-GO-GO
21st Century Entertainment £25.99
AP5 66% GP
The original *Nebulus* is an all-time classic (T100 No.36), but this sequel misses the point entirely, making the game overcomplicated and over-hard and just no fun to play at all. Get the real thing instead. ★★

NECRONOM
Linel £25.99

AP9 78% SC
Offputtingly tacky-looking at first, but worth sticking with to discover the challenging and imaginative (for a shoot-'em-up, anyway) game hidden beneath the surface. ★★★

THE NEVERENDING STORY II
Linel £25.99
AP10 42% JD
Lots of little sub-games, but nothing that really gives you any feel for the film at all. Even in a genre with some real junk around (ie the multiple-sub-games movie licence), you can find lots of better examples than this. ★

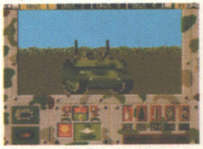
OH NO! MORE LEMMINGS
Psygnosis £25.99 (data disk version £19.99)

AP9 82% SC
A sadly missed opportunity to do something really interesting, but if you're a *Lemmings* lover who wants a new load of screens in the same vein as before, you'll be in seventh heaven. The difficulty curve is crap, though, and it's overpriced. ★★★★

ORK
Psygnosis £25.99
AP12 66% NW
This isn't a more complicated and less zappy version of *The Killing Game Show* at all – not! ★★★

OUTRUN EUROPA
US Gold £25.99
AP7 74% MB
Two years too late, this isn't a bad game, but compared to *Lotus 2* and *Vroom*, it's left standing at the starting line. The programmers seem to have got bored half way through, too. ★★★

PACIFIC ISLANDS
Empire £29.99



AP13 87% MR T100 No.63
Brilliantly exciting and tense tank sim that improves over its predecessor *Team Yankee* by a factor of four. A little complex for the arcade junkie, but fab all the same. ★★★★★

PANZER BATTLES
Strategic Studies Group £25.99
AP12 62% JD
Quite bright and colourful, but suffers from Crap Indistinguishable Icon Disease. ★★

PARASOL STARS
Ocean £25.99

AP11 88% SC T100 No.18
Much more in the vein of *Bubble Bobble* than *Rainbow Islands*, this is a great all-action platformer with a particularly inspirational two-player mode. Not quite the same addictive pull as its immediate predecessor, though. ★★★★★

PGA GOLF COURSE DISK
Electronic Arts £14.99
AP11 75% RP
Some extra bits for one of the grooviest sports games ever – has to be a good thing, really. (Unless you're sick of it already.) ★★★

PEGASUS
Gremlin £25.99

AP8 69% MR
Two-style shoot-'em-up with beautiful graphics but deeply uninspiring gameplay. Alright but brain dead and lifeless. ★★★

PINBALL DREAMS
21st Century Entertainment £25.99

AP12 87% SC T100 No.78
'But it's only a pinball game'. Yeah, and a Ferrari F40's only a car, but what the hell's that got to do with anything? Supremely gorgeous and it'll last you a lifetime – what more could you possibly ask for? ★★★★★

PIT-FIGHTER
Domark £25.99
AP7 64% MB
The kind of thing which rather worryingly passes for coin-op entertainment these days looks completely sad and weedy on a little Amiga screen. Skip it unless you've got some serious psychological problems. ★★

POPULOUS II
Electronic Arts £29.99

AP8 93% MB T100 No.8
Superb sequel that improves dramatically on what was, for most people, one of the best games of all time. If that's not a good enough recommendation, we don't know what is. Our highest-ever mark for a full-price game. ★★★★★

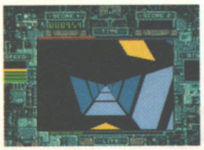
POPULOUS WORLD EDITOR
Electronic Arts £14.99
AP10 70% GP
Don't like the graphics or the landscapes in the original *Populous*? Fiddle around with them (and the worlds, of course) with this handy, if rather limited, toolkit. ★★★

POWERMONGER: WW1 EDITION
Electronic Arts £14.99
AP12 65% JD
Gives the original game a shot of much-needed character, but beyond that it doesn't really add anything to the original. ★★

PROFLIGHT
Hi Soft £39.95
AP4 52% RP
Totally serious flight-sim, ie there's absolutely nothing to shoot in it. Not really a game at all in fact, more of a flight lesson on computer. Dunno what it's doing here... ★

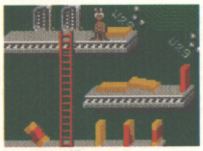
PROJECT X
Team 17 £25.99
AP13 78% SC T100 No.82
We thought this was going to be a contender for game of the year, but we were wrong. Slick and brash and arcadey, but also bugged and dramatically under-playtested. A crying shame. ★★★

PSYBORG
Loriciel £25.99



AP14 65% GP
Hyper-fast tunnel racer that's quite fun when you get into it, but still miles too thin for a full-price product. ★★★

PUSHOVER
Ocean £25.99



AP14 79% MR
Not-entirely-unpleasant little puzzler, but relies rather more on trial-and-error than actually stretching your mental faculties to any serious degree. The best domino-toppling game on the Amiga, though. ★★★

RACE DRIVIN'
Domark £25.99

AP13 72% NW T100 No. 47
A far better effort than Domark's original *Hard Drivin'* conversion, but still uncomfortably prone to wildly over-sensitive control. Still, if you liked the arcade game you'll etc. ★★★★

RBI TWO BASEBALL
Domark £29.99

AP4 78% MR
Well, it's the Amiga's best baseball game by quite a distance, so if you want an Amiga baseball game you're going to have to buy this one. If you don't, why are you reading this in the first place? ★★★

REALMS
Virgin £29.99

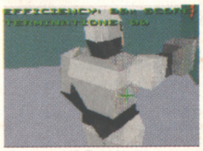
AP9 84% KF T100 No.47
It's basically just a slightly more complex version of the old *Kingdoms* game, but it's all beautifully done. The game can occasionally descend into repetitive number-juggling, though. ★★★★

RED BARON
Dynamix £34.99
AP12 19% GP
On a few thousand quid's worth of PC kit this is a reasonably exciting WW1 flight sim. On the Amiga it's one of the crappiest bits of crappy old crap there's ever been. Only for those of you who find snails thrillingly fast. ★

RISE OF THE DRAGON
Sierra £34.99
AP7 79% JD
Quite neat, this one. It's different and evocative, but the game's a pretty simple one when you get down to it. Yet again, though, don't bother if you're not one of those rare (and lucky) hard drive-owning types. ★★★

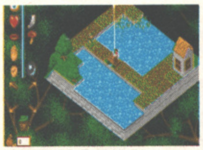
ROBOCOD
Millennium £25.99
AP7 87% CC T100 No.66
Not quite, perhaps, the console-beater everyone thought it was at first, *Robocod*'s still a cute and lovely platform romp. It's a shame it's not a bit (well, okay, a lot) tighter, but it's still worth a play or three. ★★★

ROBOCOP 3
Ocean £25.99



AP10 85% MB T100 No.71
The most surprising film licence in ages, this really brings out the feel of the film, with lots of fast-paced action depicted in impressive 3D vectors, with lovely presentation into the bargain. It doesn't quite hang together as a game, perhaps, but brave, and a definite success. ★★★★★

ROBIN HOOD
Millennium £25.99



AP6 79% CC T100 No.71
Very likeable and witty RPG-ish adventure romp, but lots of annoying little quirks drag it down a bit. Not a worldbeater, but lots more fun than you might expect. ★★★★

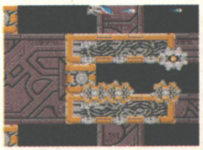
ROBOZONE
Image Works £25.99
AP9 39% SC
Useless three-section arcade game. The first (platform) bit's crap, the second (3D maze) bit's really crap, and the last (shoot-'em-up) bit isn't worth playing the other two bits for. ★

RODLAND
Storm £25.99

AP6 86% SC T100 No.31
Absolutely lovely platform-game coin-op conversion that's actually better than the original. Far too cute to be true, far too good a game not to own. ★★★★★

ROLLING RONNY
Virgin £25.99
AP7 50% CC
Sweet and challenging scrolling platformer with a lovable hero and some really crisp graphics, but the levels are too long, hard and repetitive to keep you interested for all that long. ★★★

R-TYPE II
Activision £25.99



AP4 88% SC T100 No.39
The only other serious contender (see *Apidya*) for the title of the Amiga's top shoot-'em-up. Makes the Super NES version look very very sad indeed, and that's not a bad reason for buying it by itself. ★★★★★★

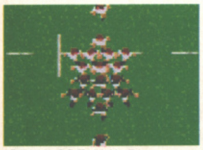
RUBICON
21st Century Entertainment £25.99
AP13 74% RP
Bland horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up, too far behind the pack to be really worth buying at this price. Nice weapons, though. ★★★

RUGBY COACH
D&H £24.99

RUGBY COACH

AP10 42% RP
Football management, without the interesting football bits. You don't want to buy this, you really don't. ★

RUGBY – THE WORLD CUP
Domark £25.99



AP8 86% CC T100 No.74
No-nonsense no-frills heavy-duty joystick waggle frenzy in this *Kick Off*-like rugby licence. A bit easy to beat, but great, exhausting fun against another human player all the same. ★★★★

SAMURAI: THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR
Impressions £29.99
AP14 55% AP
Good presentation, but when you get into the game proper it's just one more tacky and unfriendly wargame. One for ninja fetishists. ★

SARAKON
Virgin £19.99

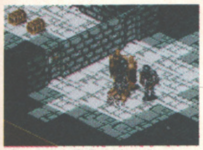
11 Bonus Points

AP5 81% CC
Addictive and surprisingly frenetic *Shanghai*-inspired Oriental puzzle game. Slightly indistinct graphics are a bit of a problem, but not so much that it spoils the game. A good one. ★★★★

THE SECRET OF THE SILVER BLADES
SSI/US Gold £25.99
AP6 8% SC
Look at *Eye Of The Beholder 2*. Look at this. Now ask yourself why you should continue to put up with such sub-standard drivel when it's so obviously possible to do so much better. Fail to find an answer. ★

7 COLOURS
Infogrames £19.99
AP8 47% JD
Nice idea, but once again a puzzle game turns out to be more a test of chance than a genuine brainteaser. Never mind, eh? ★

SHADOWLANDS
Domark £29.99



AP11 87% MR T100 No.49
Very lovely RPG with a neat light-and-darkness effect, which (despite the fact it does have some gameplay implications) is mainly just a cosmetic gimmick on top of what's a well-designed and absorbing game. Good stuff, though occasionally a tad sluggish. ★★★★

SHADOW SORCEROR
US Gold £27.99
AP8 71% MR
Not very accessible – and not very appealing to FRP purists either – this is an awkward, disjointed and generally unfulfilling game. Worth a try if you're after something a bit different, though *Shadowlands* does it better. ★★★

SILENT SERVICE 2
MicroProse £34.99
AP6 86% CC T100 No.62
Fantastically gripping and atmospheric submarine simulation, not that it's got much competition to shine against. If you've ever fancied yourself in a U-boat or a hunter-killer, you'll love this to death. ★★★★★

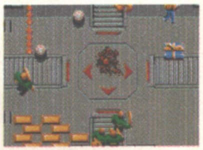
SIM ANT
Ocean £34.99
AP14 59% MB
Some of the most appalling programming seen in a professional game in years ruins what could have been a really interesting concept. Even if you've got a hard drive, forget it. ★

THE SIMPSONS
Ocean £25.99

AP5 83% MB
Surprisingly good arcade-adventure licence, even if it is almost identical to the Nintendo NES version. Aesthetically yuk, but good fun to play, if a little on the hard side. ★★★★

SLIDERS
Palace £25.99
AP5 56% MB
Marble Madness meets *Speedball*, but it's almost totally unplayable. ★

SMASH TV
Ocean £25.99



AP9 81% MR
Massively disappointing conversion of one of the best coin-ops in years. Written in such a way as to cater for the American market, so why should you spend any of your hard-earned Sterling on it? ★★★

SPACE 1889
Empire £30.99
AP9 74% SC
Inferior follow-up to *MegaTraveller*, although it's not a bad RPG thing in its own right. The idea is a lot more interesting than the execution, though. ★★★

SPACE ACE II
Empire £34.99

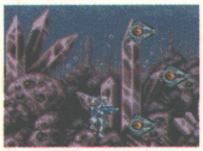
AP10 17% SC
Look, it's simple. Are you a total cretin? Do you want to see crap games come out on the Amiga in the future? If the answer to those questions is 'no', don't buy this game. There's nothing else to it. ★

SPACE CRUSADE
Gremlin £25.99
AP12 85% KF T100 No.60
Excellent boardgame conversion which does away with all that tedious faffing around with bits of plastic and dice, but doesn't lose any of the features of the original game. Very classy. ★★★★

SPACE GUN
Ocean £25.99
AP12 69% MR
Zappy *Operation Thunderbolt* clone, but nowhere near as good as *Operation Thunderbolt*. Fun with a Trojan Light Phaser, but not much else. ★★

SPOILS OF WAR
Internecine £29.99
AP14 45% JD
Tedious rubbish. We've said it often enough by now, but just to reiterate – something being a wargame isn't an excuse for it being programmed to sub-1986 standards. ★

STARUSH
Ubi Soft £25.99



AP14 64% SC
Lots of nice touches in this zodiac-inspired blaster, but unfortunately they're not attached to a decent game. Not a rip-off, but not worth buying either, paradoxically enough. ★★★

STEEL EMPIRE
Millennium £29.99
AP11 63% RP
There aren't many wargames set in the near future, but this is, er, one of them. It didn't set our hearts on fire, but being objective this is actually quite good. Only quite good, mind you... ★★★

STEVE McQUEEN WESTPHASER
Loriciel £25.99

AP10 25% SC
A funny cartoon version of *Operation Wolf* set in the Wild West is undoubtedly a good idea, but it would be an even better idea to make it playable too. ★

STORM MASTER
Silmarils £25.99
AP11 86% MS T100 No.72
Another *Kingdoms* game, but there's lots more to do in this one than *Realms*, and there's more variation to the gameplay too. ★★★★

STRATEGO
Accolade £25.99
AP7 52% CC
Technically good conversion of a board game that simply doesn't work as a human-vs-computer effort. And you can't even play another person at it, either. ★★

STRIKER MANAGER
D&H £24.99
AP5 18% CC
Football management, except instead of the whole team, you get to manage just the centre forward! Excellent! Not! ★

STRIP POKER DELUXE II
CDS £25.99
AP8 7% CC
The only good thing about this is that it plays a better game of cards than *Cover Girl Poker* does. It's still complete and utter rubbish, though. ★

STRIKE FLEET
Electronic Arts £29.99
AP9 64% CC
Lots of really interesting guns and stuff to use, but a surprisingly shallow game when you look closely at it. Not much cop. ★★

SUPER SPACE INVADERS
Domark £25.99
AP8 51% RP
A groovy arcade game becomes a total disaster of slowness and programming incompetence on the Amiga. More like the 1977 original than the sexy *Super Space Invaders* coin-op, this is junk. ★

SWAP
Palace £25.99
AP5 59% CC
An inventive puzzler, but like several others it's easier and more rewarding to play by random trial-and-error than it is by actually puzzling things out. Reasonable, but a long way short of the next *Tetris*. ★★

THEIR FINEST MISSIONS
US Gold £15.99
AP7 70% JD
Interesting enough, but there's nothing here you couldn't get for free by using the original game's custom mission option. Save your money, unless you're a terminally lazy fan of *Their Finest Hour*. ★★

THUNDER BURNER
Loriciel £19.99
AP10 30% RP
Utterly nightmarish *Space-Harrier*-without-all-the-nifty-flying-around-bits excuse for a shoot-'em-up. This is the kind of thing that gives the French a bad name. ★

THUNDERJAWS
Domark £25.99
AP8 17% SC
Then again, the British don't come out too well either if you look at this sort of thing. Average *Rolling Thunder*-type coin-op, dreadful conversion, and that's all you need to know. ★

TERMINATOR 2
Ocean £25.99

AP6 65% CC
Compare this multiple-sub-games tragedy to *Hudson Hawk* to see how you should and shouldn't (not in that order) do a movie licence game. Pathetically dire, if we're being honest about it. ★

TILT
Genias £25.99
AP10 50% JD
Similar in many ways to *Boston Bomb Club*, but a whole lot less lovable, this is a simplistic and repetitive puzzler that doesn't bear up to more than a few games. ★★

TIP OFF
Anco £25.99

AP10 75% GP
Pretty iffy attempt at transferring the success of *Kick Off* to a basketball game, spoiled by dodgy control and the fact that basketball simply doesn't work the same way as football does (not that *Kick Off* played much like football anyway). ★★

TITUS THE FOX
Titus £25.99

AP12 88% SC/MR T100 No.22
Hudson Hawk meets *The Blues Brothers*. Huge, wonderful platformer, dragged down a bit by mammoth disk accessing, but no less unmissable for all that. The cutest game hero in the known universe, too (nobody's based a game on Winona Ryder yet). ★★★★★

TOP BANANA
Hex £25.99
AP11 45% JD
Bizarre environmentally-friendly (both in concept and execution) *Rainbow Islands* clone, this is certainly one of the oddest games we've seen in a while. Unfortunately, while it's almost exactly the same game as *Rainbow Islands*, it's only about a tenth as good. ★★★

ULTIMA VI
Mindscape £30.99

AP13 90% MR T100 No.17
Not the kind of thing for RPG virgins to start on, or for anyone without a hard drive to even consider, but this is currently pretty much the state of the art for Amiga role-playing. Enough to keep you going for months. ★★★★★

UNDER PRESSURE
Electronic Zoo £25.99
AP8 12% SC
An *Alien Storm*-esque shoot-'em-up which looks incredibly like a Psygnosis game and plays incredibly like a complete load of old tosh. Probably the least involved game we've ever reviewed. ★

UTOPIA
Gremlin £29.99

AP6 81% SC
A moderately successful marriage between *Sim City* and *Mega lo Mania*, but lacking the depth and spark (respectively) of those two classic titles, *Utopia* is a good game that should have been a brilliant one. Slick but ultimately unsatisfying. ★★★

UTOPIA: THE NEW WORLDS
Gremlin £14.99
AP14 60% SC
Er, some new worlds for *Utopia*. They're okay, really. Is it just us or is £15 a lot of money for a data disk? ★★★

VENGEANCE OF EXCALIBUR
Virgin £30.99

AP13 60% MS
Not 500+ compatible, which is outrageous seven months after the Plus's release. Otherwise, an attractive, but pretty average RPG romp which doesn't significantly improve on its unimpressive predecessor. ★★

VIDEOKID
Gremlin £25.99

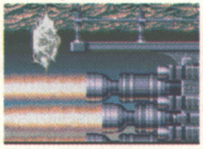
AP11 70% SC
Mega Twins without the platforms. Okay, it's not really all that similar – it just looks that way initially. This is a rather pretty, constantly scrolling shoot-'em-up, and quite good fun really. ★★★

VOLFIED
Empire £25.99
AP8 80% MB T100 No.90
Arcade classic *Qix* revisited. A near-perfect clone of the coin-op, but curiously it's not as much fun as the 1980 original. Still, very different and enjoyable to play, even if it's not the toughest game ever. ★★★★

VROOM
Ubi Soft £25.99
AP12 88% SC T100 No.35
The missing link between *F1GP* and *Lotus 2*, *Vroom* straddles two genres without falling between two stools. Great as a simple foot-down arcade game, but excellent fun as a serious tactical Formula One sim too, this is a deeply lovely, and stupendously fast game that you shouldn't be without. ★★★★★

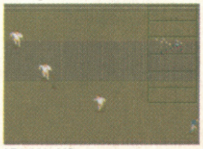
WILD WHEELS
Ocean £25.99
AP7 52% SC
Extremely basic future-football game played with cars instead of footballers. Promising idea, but this effort feels and looks half-finished. There's not much to do, and what there is isn't very inspiring. ★★

WOLFCHILD
Core Design £25.99



AP10 58% SC
Hugely disappointing production-line platformer that's the sequel to *Switchblade* in all but name. Too short, too easy, too repetitive, and lacking the character and inspiration that separates a good game from the run-of-the-mill. ★★★

WORLD CLASS RUGBY
Audiogenic £25.99



AP9 63% MS
Poor attempt to do for rugby what *John Madden Football* did for the American gridiron game. Over-technical, and a pain to get to grips with. ★★★

WORLD CLASS RUGBY – THE FIVE NATIONS
Audiogenic £25.99
AP14 86% MS
Dramatically-improved version of the earlier game, right up there with *Rugby – The World Cup* for playability and action. The 3D second-person perspective view is neat, too. ★★★★

WWF WRESTLEMANIA
Ocean £25.99
AP10 39% GP
There's a limited amount of gameplay scope in any wrestling game, but even so there's a lot more to be got out of the *WWF* than is achieved by this lame and cynical cash-in. Strictly for educationally underprivileged 8-year-olds. ★

ZONE WARRIOR
Electronic Arts £25.99

AP7 42% JD
Totally horrible, unbelievably simplistic mazey platform game with primitive graphics and even more primitive gameplay. The most remarkable thing about this trash is that it comes from the usually-reliable EA. Don't even think about it. ★

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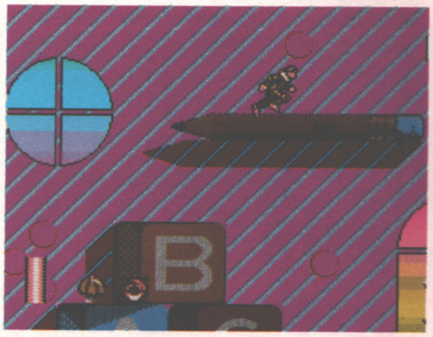
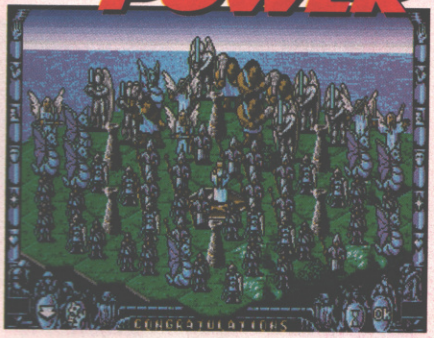
CHART ATTACK

Ideal for the budget-minded gamer – you get four of the most individual and impressive Amiga games around in the same pack! Impressive is the only way to describe *Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge*, the original and (some say) best Lotus driving game, and here it's joined by hack'n'slash romp *Ghouls'N'Ghosts*, the bizarre *Venus: The Flytrap* and lovable old *James Pond*. An excellent choice.



HARLEQUIN

Robocod is a great game, there's no denying it, and an excellent way to prove to your friends that the Amiga can do the sort of things people buy 16-bit consoles for. However – and make no mistake about this – *Harlequin* is better. It's bigger, it's more packed with stuff, it's just as imaginative, and things don't slow down half as much when there's lots going on on screen. It's the bee's knees!



CELTIC LEGENDS

'Celtic' like the Northern European race, not 'Celtic' like the football team, this stunning strategy/action/role-playing game has proved a shock hit in the AMIGA POWER offices – fans of the *Chaos*-style of gameplay will love it! Especially fun in two-player mode, this unusual hex-based wargame/action game proves once and for all that strategy doesn't have to be boring. Indeed, it's gorgeous stuff!

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AMIGA POWER BACK ISSUES

1 May 1991 Our very first issue! Big games like *Eye Of The Beholder, Gods* and *Cybercon III*, the first part of a gigantic *Rainbow Islands* player's guide, lots of chat from the Bitmap/Renegade crew and more! **On the disk:** *Bombuzal* – the complete game!*

2 June 1991 And it just gets better! If you manage to get past the (ahem) swoony picture of Peter Molyneux on the cover you'll get to thrill to such treats as a giant Bullfrog interview and reviews of games like – yes! – *Monkey Island*! **On the disk:** *Kid Gloves* – the complete game!

3 July 1991 You want to know about Core Design? CDTV? *F-15 Strike Eagle II*? *Deuteros*? *Toki*? Then this issue is the place to come! It's even got our first 'In The Style Of...' in it! **On the disk:** brilliant *Exile* special world, *Prehistorik* preview, three typically excellent PD games!*

4 August 1991 The Ultimate Autumn Preview, film games, The Assembly Line interviewed, *Jimmy White's Snooker* reviewed and more! **On the disk:** *Beast Busters, The Executioner* plus three PD games! **Plus!** Giant tips poster – *Kid Gloves* and *Bombuzal* solutions!*

5 September 1991 Giant Gremlin Work In Progress feature, all the new god sims compared, DMA Design talk *Lemmings*, plus *Mega lo Mania, The Simpsons, Thunderhawk* reviewed. **On the disk:** *Barbarian II* demo, plus five (five!) great PD games!*

6 October 1991 *Indy Atlantis*, and more – giant US Gold Work In Progress feature, *Midwinter II, Cruise For A Corpse, Magic Pockets* reviewed. **On the disk:** *Rolling Ronny, Captain Planet, Bullfrogger* and more!* **Plus!** Five free AMIGA POWER postcards!

7 November 1991 *Monkey Island II, Young Indy Jones* – Lucasfilm tell all, World Of Commodore show, Bob Jacob of Cinemaware interviewed, *Formula 1 Grand Prix, Blues Brothers, Lotus II, Robocod* reviewed... **On the disk:** *Leander, Video Kid,* plus PD games!*

8 December 1991 All I want for Xmas... seasonal hardware guide, giant Xmas compilations feature, reviews coming out of our ears (*Populous II, First Samurai, Heimdall, MicroProse Golf, Knights Of The Sky*...) **On the disk:** *Cisco Heat, Elvira Arcade* (1 meg), best of PD!*

9 January 1992 Giant FRP game feature, Code Masters interviewed, our Games Of The Year, reviews of *Smash TV, Birds Of Prey, Knightmare* and more! **Double disk issue!** Giant *Knights Of The Sky* entire training section (1 meg), *Puggles* (great Q-Bert-style PD game).

10 February 1992 The Ultimate Spring Game Guide, If Graftgold had known then..., the best and worst of games packaging, plus reviews of *RoboCop 3, Another World, WWF, Leander* and much, much more! **On the disk:** PD Special – featuring *Mr Wobbly Leg, Raid* and *Squamble.*

11 March 1992 The new Ocean – all the year's big previews, *Mega lo Mania II* – diary of a game starts, buyer's guide to platform games, plus reviews of *John Madden, Shadowlands, Harlequin,* and more! **On the disk:** *Pacific Islands* exclusive mission, plus three PD games!

12 April 1992 Giant Psygnosis preview feature (all the new games), massive beat-'em-up buyer's guide, and some great games reviewed – *Parasol Stars, Titus The Fox, Vroom* and more! **Double disk issue!** Great demos – *Titus The Fox, Project X,* plus *Rome* complete game and more!

13 May 1992 Bumper Anniversary Issue! Includes the new AP Top 100, hidden games guide, plus reviews of *Apidya, Project X, Ultima VI* and more! **Double disk issue!** Special Sensible Disk including *Soccer* and *Wizkid*. And! Playable demos of *Campaign, Pinball Dreams* and the *Hook* slideshow!

14 June 1992 All the new footy games previewed! All the top joysticks tested! All the big games reviewed! *Fire & Ice, Addams, Eye Of The Beholder II, Legend, Pushover, SimAnt,* and more! **Double disk issue!** Great playable levels of *Legend* and *Aqua Ventura,* plus *Mister & Missis* and more!

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No 5
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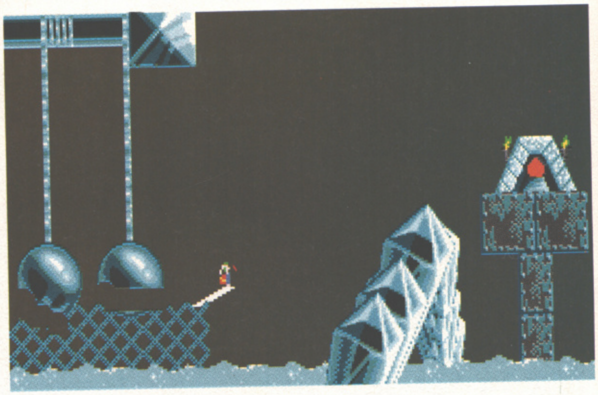
UNIVERSE

LEMMINGS

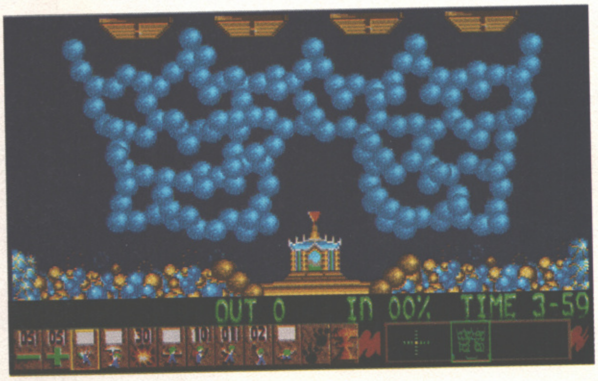
This month we don't have one hero, but thousands of 'em...!

LEMMINGS

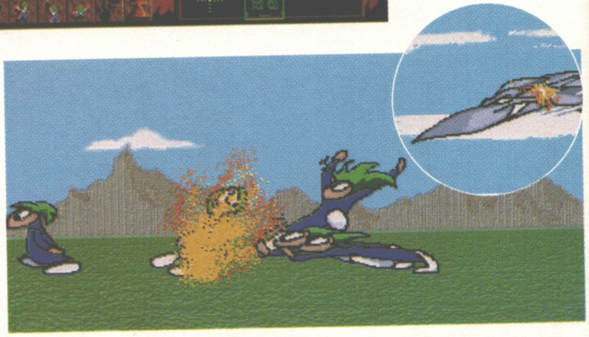
FULL NAME There isn't one Lemming, but lots – all identical (with the exception of the various abilities they temporarily receive – see Known Abilities) and all conspicuously lacking in personal names.
OCCUPATION As small furry creatures the Lemmings don't have an occupation (apart from temporary ones, which they undertake with a laudable single mindedness – see Known Abilities). They simply 'are'.
LEGAL STATUS Unknown. As animals it is unlikely the Lemmings enjoy any legal status. However, their human-like behaviour makes it possible they could be citizens of some unrevealed 'Lemming nation'.
MARITAL STATUS Unknown, though it is possible that some Lemmings are related to others through marriage or similar.
KNOWN RELATIVES AND ASSOCIATES Other Lemmings.
ADVERSARIES The Lemmings have no known enemies as such, but prove extremely vulnerable to natural traps and pitfalls. Real lemmings (*Lemmus lemmus*) migrate in late summer after a population build up, the large numbers involved often causing mass panic to set in, resulting in reckless, undirectional movement and many deaths. The game animals, however, don't so much panic as walk blindly ahead no matter what's in front of them – different behaviour, though the resulting mass deaths are the same.
AGE Real Lemmings only live a few years, though in the game they tend not even to make it that far, such are the perils they face!
DISTINGUISHING FEATURES Unlike real lemmings, our heroes stand erect upon their hind legs. Their colour scheme is also unmissable – wearing blue jumpers(!), they have green hair and white skin. The only time this changes is in two player mode, when one set of Lemmings get a green jumpers/blue hair colour scheme.
BASE OF OPERATIONS Unknown. Apparently migratory.
FIRST APPEARANCE *Lemmings* (Psygnosis, Christmas 1990).
GAME APPEARANCES TO DATE *Lemmings* (see above), *Oh No! More Lemmings* (Psygnosis levels disk and stand-alone game, Christmas 1991), *Lemmingoids* (PD), *Operation Lemmings* (PD), assorted PD demos.
HISTORY The Lemmings first appeared on the Amiga in the game *Lemmings*, where they were introduced as a fun loving, cuddly but essentially dense race, seemingly hell bent on self destruction. The data disk/immediate sequel *Oh No! More Lemmings* saw little real change in their character, though assorted unofficial PD games and demos have depicted them in a number new lights (see pictures).
HEIGHT Normally a handful of inches in length, though putting a size on the game creatures is hard – there's nothing to give them scale.
WEIGHT Normally less than 100 grams, though see above.
EYES Black.
HAIR Green (some are Blue in two player mode).
STRENGTH LEVEL Unknown.
KNOWN ABILITIES The average Lemming is a Walker – a suicidally stupid creature who will simply walk into danger unless forced in a different direction. However, individual Lemmings can gain additional abilities for short periods of time – Climber Lemmings can climb vertical surfaces, Floater Lemmings can jump from high ledges without harm, Blockers prevent fellow Lemmings from passing, Bridge Builders build bridges, Bashers dig horizontally, Miners dig straight down, and Diggers burrow vertically.
PARAPHERNALIA The Lemmings use various tools to help them through the game. Miner Lemmings use pick axes, Bridge Builders carry a sack of bricks which they use to build bridges, while Floater Lemmings use an umbrella parachute to get safely to the ground.
NEXT APPEARANCE *Lemmings II* ("though it may not be called that" say Psygnosis), due Christmas 1992.



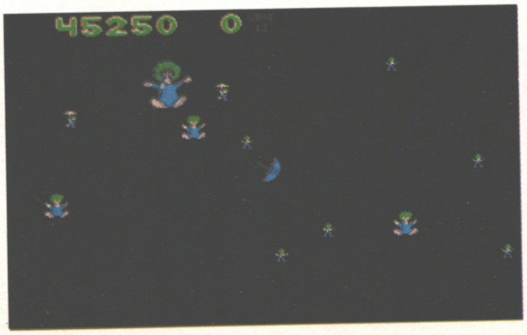
How do you get across this one then? A lone Lemming ponders the problem in this screen from the original (and best) *Lemmings* game.



One of the 'Wild' screen from *Oh No! More Lemmings*. Our cuddly little heroes have yet to drop out through the trap door at the top into the screen – time, then, for you to take a few seconds out to think up a plan about how to complete the level.



Famous US-based demo creator Eric Schwartz included the Lemmings in one of his impressive military style PD animations. Here they are getting shot at by a cartoon fighter plane...



***Lemmingoids* – an *Asteroids*-style PD game with Lemmings in it, the big difference being that you get to shoot Lemmings instead of, er, asteroids. Big Lemmings split into little ones when shot, pretty much as you'd expect, while you control the blue umbrella you see in the centre of the screen. And that's about it, really...**

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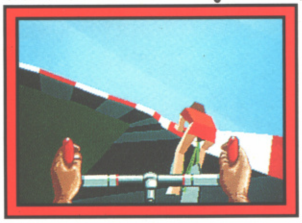

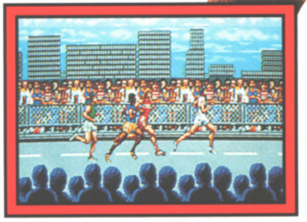

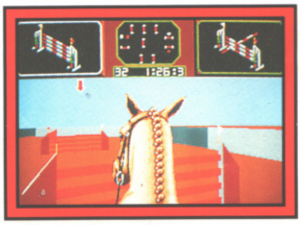

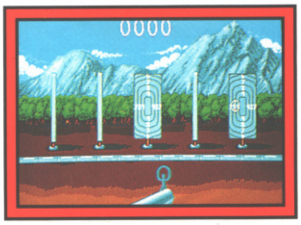

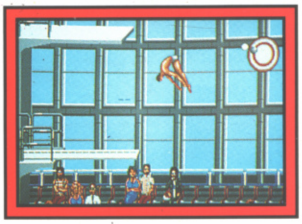

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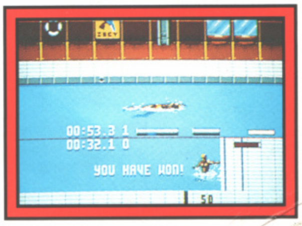

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GRAHAM TAYLORS
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Tuesday , 6th August 1991
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FRIENDLY
EXIT
FIXTURES
Arsenal
Select Formation
4-2-4
4-3-3
4-4-2
5-3-2
1-3-3-3
3-2-5
ROLL OF HONOUR
YELLOW CARD GIVEN TO GARY BULL
OTHER RESULTS
NEXT
EXIT
Sport
Imps lose to derby rivals.
McCarthy retires after injury

Graham Taylor has had a unique career in football, at 23 he became the youngest fully-qualified F.A. Coach, at 28 he became the youngest manager in the football league. In 1982, with the financial backing of Elton John, he achieved first division status for Watford. This places Graham Taylor alongside only a handful of managers who have taken a football club from the fourth division to the first. In July 1990 Graham was appointed England manager. You now have the opportunity in this management simulation to emulate one of the most successful managers in football today.

GRAHAM TAYLOR SOCCER CHALLENGE - MAIN FEATURES

1/ Two separate sections follow the manager's full career. Take charge of a League Club and work your way to the top, then try to guide the England team to success in the European Championships.
2/ Created with assistance from Graham Taylor and the Football Association.
3/ Includes over 200 teams, all with realistic strip colours, skill levels, ground names and squads with real names and data. Player data includes date of birth, height and over 10 skill factors that combine to make every player truly unique.
4/ Competitions include the English League, over five divisions (including the new Premier Division and GM Conference), FA Cup, League Cup, ZDS Trophy, Autoglass Trophy and European Championships (qualifiers and finals).
5/ Other features include:-

AS LEAGUE MANAGER. Over 3000 individual players. Fully animated graphic match sequence. Watch your own matches or any other. Realistic transfer market. Other teams buy, sell, loan and free-transfer players. Diary section. Plan the week ahead and choose training dates or arrange friendly matches (during close season). Full trainee and reserve squad for every team. Nurture your talents and bring players through to the senior squad. Injuries, suspensions and medical records. View fixtures, cup draws, top score tables, League tables and many more statistic pages. Choose training programme for team or individual players. Scout reports. Daily news pages keep you abreast of all developments to your own and other teams. Players will age, may deteriorate in skill and eventually retire. Realistic crowd figures dependant on league position, actual game capacities and team proximity. Manager may be fired, or you may resign at any time to take over another team.

AS NATIONAL TEAM MANAGER. Negotiate with League Managers for the release of players for the National squad. Attend League games to assess potential of players for National squad. Arrange friendly International games. Play European Championship qualifying games. Play in the European Championship finals in Sweden. Fully animated in game sequences. All European National teams included. All National team players. Update Manager's diary. Account for injured and suspended players. Players status, appearance and goals scored. Player reports.

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NEXT MONTH!

Well, this is it – there's going to be at least one big change in the next issue, but we're not going to tell you what it is. (Betcha can't wait, eh?) Specific things we *can* tell you, however, include the fact that e'll have more Things To Come – we might even extend the size of the section – while Definition Of Sound will look at vertically scrolling hoot-'em-ups, and we'll run one of the biggest, sexiest compos ever. The magazine goes out on July 25th! Whatever you do, don't miss it!

D-Generation *– next month in the world's best Amiga games magazine!*

HAM
ORS
Challenge

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CHALLENGE - MAIN FEATURES

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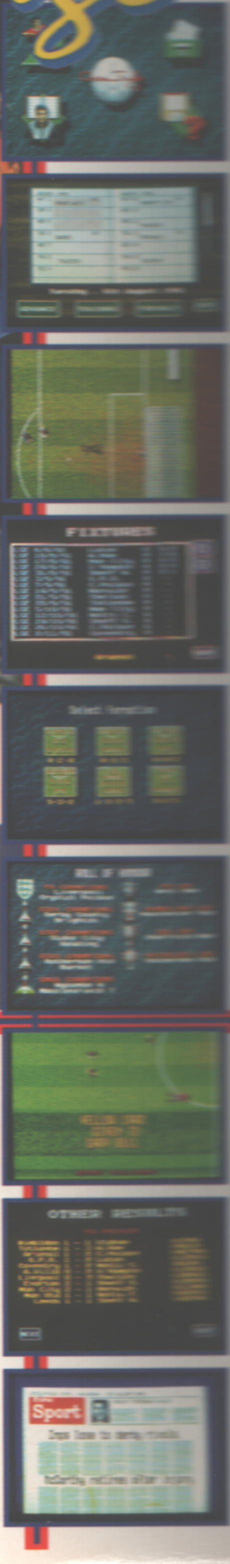

NEXT MONTH!

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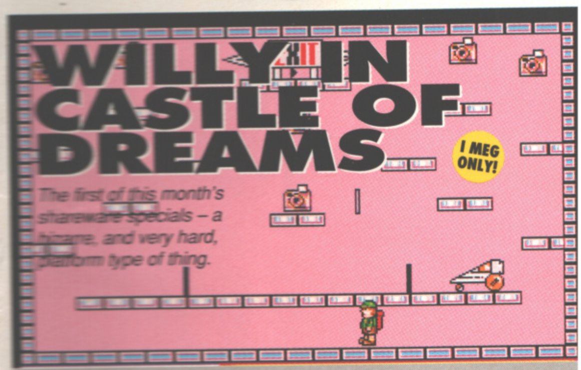


WILLY IN CASTLE OF DREAMS

1 MEG ONLY!

The first of this month's shareware specials – a bizarre, and very hard, platform type of thing.

INVADERS II

Brilliant horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up fun. It's magic!

SATU

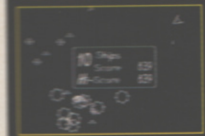
Coloured blocks, oriental-type style, and lots of fun.

BY MENTAL IMAGE

AMIGA POWER

WANT TO KNOW MORE? THEN FLICK TO PAGE 6 →

AMEGA RACE



Incredibly addictive Asteroids-influenced blaster of unexpected greatness. (Just try it!)

NUMBER FUMBLER

Number Fumbler
8
12
15
4
9
11
5
1
13
6
Mix
Who

Simply slide numbers about to get them in the proper order. It's dead easy! (Not!)

GALACTIC

INSERT COIN
13 SECONDS LEFT
BONUS SECTION

It's new! It's a shoot-'em-up (sort of)! It's got a mad king in it! It's incredibly fast! It's weird! What else could it be but Galactic, a brill new game by ex-C64 hero Stavros Fasoulas? And here's the playable demo!

disk 15